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ABSTRACT

This report offers an achievable vision of a future system of continuing education for adults in England and Wales in chapter 1. Chapter 2 argues that economic, technological, social, and personal pressures make an unanswerable case for the comprehensive provision of continuing opportunities for the education of adults. Chapter 3 briefly surveys the patterns of provision of education and training opportunities in England and Wales and shows that many adults now are undereducated to meet the demands already being made on them. Chapter 4 surveys the main barriers to access for different types of learners and suggests ways in which the existing provision could be made available to more people. In the next four chapters, the best ways to develop continuing education in the the 1980s and 1990s are examined. Discussion focuses on information, advisory, and counseling services; ways in and through the education system; accessibility of institutions; and new patterns of learning. Chapters 9 and 10 consider alternative systems and proposed improvements to the existing financial support system and ways of extending entitlements to educational leave. Chapter 11 discusses staffing and training and chapter 12, educational legislation. The final chapter briefly summarizes the case for the creation of a comprehensive system of continuing education and sets out the main lines of action recommended and a broad timetable for their implementation. (YLB)

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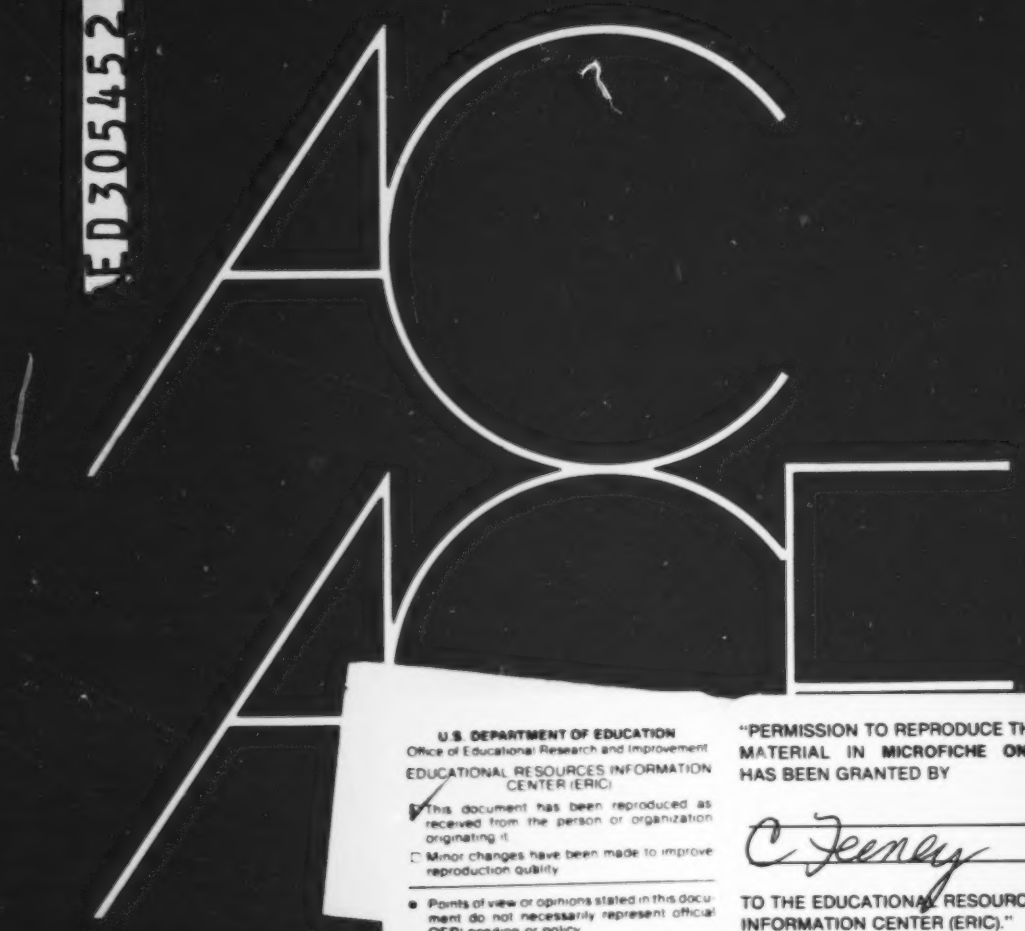

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CONTINUING EDUCATION: FROM POLICIES TO PRACTICE

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The Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education 1977-1983 was established by the Secretary of State for Education and Science with the following remit:

> *To advise generally on matters relevant to the provision of education for adults in England and Wales, and in particular:*
>
> *(a) to promote co-operation between the various bodies in adult education and review current practice, organisation and priorities, with a view to the most effective deployment of available resources; and*
>
> *(b) to promote the development of future policies and priorities, with full regard to the concept of education as a process continuing throughout life.*

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CONTINUING EDUCATION: FROM POLICIES TO PRACTICE

A report on the future development of a system of continuing education for adults in England and Wales

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CHAIRMAN'S PREFACE

Since the Advisory Council was established at the end of 1977 we have covered a great deal of ground in trying to attend, wherever possible, to the enormous range of activities and concerns which make up or affect the continuing education of adults. Along with our attempts to help with new developments in the more effective provision of educational opportunities for adults, we have felt obliged to give time and effort to responding as promptly and fully as we could to the pressing and sometimes destructive effects of national and local policy decisions, decisions which were essentially economic rather than educational.

But from the beginning the Council has been determined to keep two main areas at the centre of its work: the adult education services as they are conventionally and rather narrowly construed, and the potential for a very much more broadly conceived system of continuing education for adults to which the whole of the post-school education sector would actively and recognisably contribute.

Council's report on the present public adult education service, *Protecting the Future for Adult Education*, was published last year. In that we saw no other sensible course except to start from the extreme financial difficulties affecting, and in some places almost disabling, the service; and to propose ways and means of holding the line sufficiently intact so as to at least retain a working base for renewal in more propitious times. We sought to ensure a short-term future without which the longer-term prospects for the adult education service would be even bleaker. That realism was criticised by some as lacking in vision and as an acceptance of the political world's apparent disregard for adult education. If such criticism needs any refutation, the following pages provide it. In this latest report we address the development of the wider scene of continuing education, in which the adult education services will have a crucial part to play and invaluable experience to contribute; but they will not be alone in providing systematically for the education of adults.

In advocating a radical shift of emphasis by the whole post-school education system towards the educational needs of adults, the Council may now perhaps be charged with forsaking reality for the most visionary of policies. That we would not deny, at least in the sense that the report argues for major changes in the present pattern of post-school education; and our vision extends to policy developments over the next twenty years. Indeed it is only realistic to plan for action over that time scale when that action calls, as it does, for some fundamental changes in the way we go about thinking and working for the education of adults. But we would add, as the report itself confirms,

that we have aimed to be practical in proposing policies that can be translated into action. We have indicated the different time scales across the next twenty years within which it would be feasible to expect action — some soon, some later; and where possible we have suggested the likely order of additional expenditure required.

We are convinced that the report does offer an achievable vision of the future for the continuing education of adults. For the purposes of the report we have set the far side of the policy making future at the year 2000: to give time for planning, for influencing shifts in attitudes (both among educators and the public), and for gradually building up and tapping an unprecedented supply and undeniable demand for adult learning. Our confidence is strengthened by these three propositions:

- That social and economic circumstances over the next twenty years will increasingly provide both the need and the opportunity for continuing education (chapter 2 of the report substantiates that) and that this will further influence the validity of the second proposition, namely:
- That, despite the current dominant concern with the education and training of young adults and the consequent disproportionately high funding allocated to that politically sensitive area, there is a growing national and local political awareness of the inescapable need for, and the value of, continuing education and training for adults.
- That staff throughout the post-school education sector (and to a lesser extent in the schools) are becoming increasingly aware that the education and training of adults (and not just young adults) must become a much more clearly established part of their responsibilities. Many of the responses to our preliminary discussion paper, *Towards Continuing Education*, bear this out, although they also show frustration over the sometimes limited success with present efforts to move in this direction.

There remains one foreseeable and some might say formidable objection to the Council's practical approach to the development of continuing education: that an impoverished national economy offers little or no chance for any significant change in educational policies and provision. From this we accept only that hard times do not encourage confidence in bright futures: yet the same hard times are the very moment when there should be clear thinking about the changes needed in the future. The achievement of many of those changes requires will and commitment, rather than money; and a lot can and should be done to prepare the way for longer-term developments through improving and extending the provision which already exists. But we should also hesitate before dismissing the fact that our economy is still among the richest in the world. We can, and do, spend very large amounts on education and training. The Council,

in publishing this report, is justifying a more equitable share of that investment for the education of adults. It could prove to be a most worthwhile investment.

The institutional scope of this report has been deliberately and properly cast wide. It advocates adult learning in universities, polytechnics, institutes of higher education, further education colleges, schools, adult education and community centres, at home and at work, and wherever else learning opportunities can be organised and provided — whether face-to-face or at a distance. There will only be a recognisable and comprehensive continuing education system in this country when all these educational institutions consciously set about opening their doors and providing tuition with adults clearly in mind. This seems to members of the Council a proper, unavoidable and unexceptionable aim for the post-school sector, but we are only too well aware that at present most of the institutions in that sector lack any common consciousness of their role in continuing education. In addressing this report to those institutions, we trust that that common consciousness will be awakened.

The increasing use of the phrase 'continuing education' over the past few years has been accompanied by a growing accumulation of meanings for it. We have made our meaning plain in the first chapter. We consider that the broad definition of continuing education which informs this report, and which we hope the report will help to establish as common usage, is the most appropriate interpretation for our object of advancing policies and provision for the education of adults. The report advocates the development of a 'comprehensive system' of continuing education, a phrase which we have deliberately chosen to use, as defined in chapter 2 (paragraph 2.17), but it too may be open to misinterpretation. So let me make clear now, what the report itself will confirm, that we do not see a continuing education system as another education 'sector' to march beside the administratively distinct sectors of school, further and higher education. By 'system' we mean not an administrative division but a conjunction of policies, funding, provision and attitudes, which effect changes in all the present educational sectors to the advantage of a rapidly growing number of adult learners. In its essentials a system of continuing education is all that which makes it increasingly possible for more and more adults to continue their education. That may be a tautology, but definitions tend to be — by definition.

As a final word on meanings, I would add that in this report the Council uses the phrase 'adult general education' in the same sense as in its earlier report on *Protecting the Future for Adult Education*. That is, to signify all the varied educational opportunities offered to adults by local education authorities, university extra-mural departments, and

voluntary bodies such as the Workers' Educational Association, in cultural, physical, basic, social and civic education, which have hitherto been negatively classified, and consequently often stigmatised, as non-vocational education.

On behalf of the Council I express sincere thanks to our Council colleagues who formed the committee (see page 211) which undertook the demanding job of preparing the initial drafts of the report. They worked long and hard, and especially their convenor, Naomi McIntosh, who gave so much of her already fully occupied time to bring the report to its final shape. We are also indebted to David Stringer who did an invaluable job in serving the Committee as its enquiry officer. Finally all of us on the Council want to thank the many people (see page 207) who responded so fully and helpfully to our discussion paper. It was very encouraging to find such widespread support for the concept of continuing education and to receive informed opinion about how to transform that concept into practice. I hope that those respondents, and everyone else who reads this report, will consider that we have helped to start that move from policies to practice.

RICHARD HOGGART
Chairman of Council

January 1982

In many places throughout the report the Council identifies general and specific priorities for action to develop continuing education opportunities. In order not to interrupt the text, these are not presented as formal recommendations, nor are they distinguished by a different type-face. They are instead drawn together in the final chapter, in which the Council summarises its views on the action needed for the development of a comprehensive system of continuing education for adults.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report stems from the terms of reference given to the Advisory Council by the Secretary of State for Education and Science:

"To advise generally on matters relevant to the provision of education for adults in England and Wales"

and particularly from the Council's second charge:

"To promote the development of future policies and priorities, with full regard to the concept of education as a process continuing throughout life".

Those same words also appeared in the terms of reference of the Russell Committee, and much of their valuable work has informed our thinking, but their report[1] was confined to non-vocational adult education. Our remit is much wider. When the Council was established the Department of Education and Science made it clear that the phrase 'education for adults' in our terms of reference was intended to be broader than 'adult education'. This is consistent with the useful interpretation in the report of the Venables Committee on Continuing Education:

"We have chosen to focus attention on education for adults which is normally resumed after a break or interruption often involving a period in employment".[2]

In a similar way the DES discussion paper on *Continuing Education: Post Experience Vocational Provision for those in Employment* distinguishes between initial and post-initial or continuing education:

"Initial education can be defined as the continuous preparatory period of formal study, to whatever level, completed before entering main employment. Continuing education covers anything which follows".[3]

1.2 We believe that the time has come for this country to give the same serious attention to the education of adults as it has given to the education of children. By this we mean that:

- All adults should be entitled to continued opportunities for education throughout their lives.

(1) See pages 197 to 205 for notes and references

- The education of adults should be given an increased priority in the allocation of resources.

Our definition of continuing education is therefore a broad one. We do not think that it is useful to draw artificial boundaries between education and training, between vocational and general education, or between formal and informal systems of provision. We include systematic learning wherever it takes place: in libraries, in the work place, at home, in community groups and in educational institutions. The existing distinctions, often developed for organisational or funding purposes, are not necessarily important to adult students, either now or in the future. We are particularly concerned about the continued dominance of initial education: both because it takes so much of the available resources, and because of the implication that a single lengthy period of education in the early years of life is expected to meet the changing needs of people throughout their lives. We also know that the initial education received by many adults in their childhood was even then inadequate for the demands made on it. We believe that the economic, social and technological pressures facing us make the development of continuing education not merely desirable but absolutely necessary.

1.3 We do not set out to re-write the whole curriculum of the education of adults. That would be unrealistic. Even the most farsighted among us are unlikely to be able to forecast accurately the changes which we shall have learnt to take for granted as we enter the twenty-first century. Nor do we try to outline some Utopian vision in a perfect world of limitless resources and infinite opportunities. Instead we concentrate first on the practical ways of extending the full range of educational opportunities to more of the adult population throughout their lives. We go on to suggest a framework through which all adults might be provided with continuing opportunities for education — to mirror the opportunities which we have so far expected, demanded and been prepared to provide for children. The timetable for translating our blueprint into reality will not be a short one, and it will clearly depend on the general economic situation. However, there are some modest and inexpensive changes which can be made even in the short term, and a range of medium term goals which it would be possible to move towards, given broad agreement on the direction to be taken. The final achievement of the longer term goal — educational entitlements for all adults — may have to wait for better economic times, but the adults who will benefit then are now just entering school as children.

1.4 It has been argued that it is neither possible nor realistic to separate any consideration of continuing education from the work and the effects of the school system, since what happens in the period of compulsory schooling conditions, and may be conditioned by, the educational opportunities available to people thereafter. But neither the Council's remit nor our composition entitles us to do more than comment on some of the main implications of likely changes in our schools. It is clear that it will become increasingly important for schools to encourage young people to expect to continue their education at various times throughout their lives, and to equip them with the ability to go on learning. The role of our schools can be expected to change as many areas of knowledge become more rapidly obsolescent and as new technologies alter the nature of the educational process. When opportunities for continuing education become more widely available, the pressure on schools to act as the selection device for further and higher education will be reduced — to the benefit of the majority who have not until now continued their education after school. Schools will be able to broaden their curriculum, and young people will be less constrained about their choice of subjects when they know that this is not their last real chance to achieve their educational aims.

1.5 The second and closely related part of initial education, which has very important implications for our study, is the education of the sixteen to nineteen year olds. This age group has been widely studied and reported on. We welcome the recent Government report on *Education for 16 to 19 Year Olds*[4] with its recommendation that all local education authorities should review their pattern of provision for this age group and plan that provision as a 'whole', and the proposals of the Manpower Services Commission in its consultative document on *A New Training Initiative*[5]. The low proportion in comparison with other developed countries of sixteen to nineteen year olds, particularly girls, continuing to any form of further or higher education must be increased. If their educational opportunities are not improved, their capacity to take advantage of continuing education later in life must be impaired.

1.6 Any changes in the provision of initial education, particularly for the sixteen to nineteen year olds, will inevitably affect post-initial education. However, while sixteen remains the statutory minimum school leaving age, there is merit in accepting this age as the transition point between school and post-school provision, not related necessarily to where students seek to study but to how learners are financed. We consider that no

young person should be deterred from staying on in full-time education either in school or college through the lack of adequate financial support. This is particularly important at a time when the alternative for very many young people is to remain unemployed. The cost of providing better financial support for full-time education for this age group is likely to prove a better bargain, both for them and the country, than the cost of unemployment benefit.

1.7 We are disturbed that the current national and local policy initiatives for dealing with declining rolls in the schools are not being more closely linked with planning for sixteen to nineteen year olds and for the wider provision of education for adults. Some forms of secondary re-organisation facilitate an increase in educational provision for adults more readily than others. It is especially important that valuable buildings, regarded as surplus while schools rolls decline, should not be sold off too hurriedly in advance of any co-ordinated planning for their educational use by adults.[6]

1.8 The second chapter of this report argues that economic, technological, social and personal pressures make an unanswerable case for the comprehensive provision of continuing opportunities for the education of adults. The third chapter briefly surveys the patterns of provision and take-up of education and training opportunities in England and Wales and shows that many adults now are under-educated to meet the demands already being made on them. It also demonstrates that those who participate most in continuing education are those who have already had the benefit of most initial education.

1.9 There are of course already very many institutions and agencies providing a whole range of education and training opportunities for adults. But that provision is frequently not planned in any integrated way among institutions and much of it is not equally accessible to all adults. Much more needs to be done to remove the various barriers to existing provision: financial difficulties, lack of information, inappropriate entrance qualifications, and timetables awkward or impossible for adults to manage. Chapter 4 surveys the main barriers for different types of learners and suggests ways in which the existing provision could be made available to more people. It emphasizes what was seen by many of the respondents to our discussion paper *Towards Continuing Education*[7] as the most difficult barrier to tackle: the psychological barrier made up of lack of confidence and the belief that education is only for children, to be got over

and not returned to, and therefore irrelevant or of no concern to people in their adult lives.

1.10 While the demand for the existing provision is already substantial, it is also clear that whenever a major new educational opportunity is offered to adults the resultant demand is far higher than anyone had predicted. Many people have needs which they are not able to translate into demands. It is not always easy to identify needs accurately. It is also not easy for those who have never considered what they could want to actually be able to imagine and describe and demand it. As well as making existing opportunities more visible and accessible we need to find out more about latent needs and encourage their expression as actual demands. The Council's survey on *Adults — Their Educational Experience and Needs*[8] published in parallel to this report offers one step forward. As existing provision is widened and people are helped to articulate their needs and demands, so the gaps in provision will become more evident and action can be taken to meet these new demands.

1.11 In later chapters we examine the best ways to develop continuing education in the 1980s and '90s. The recurrent themes are the need to:

- Recognise that continuing education occurs in many contexts.
- Co-ordinate its provision locally and nationally with agreed priorities.
- Revise the present inappropriate priorities embodied in the division between vocational and non-vocational education.
- Provide a network of accessible local education centres designed for the use of adults.
- Develop new modes of learning.
- Introduce greater flexibility of staffing in institutions.
- Provide regular programmes for staff training and development.

1.12 We have been especially concerned about the current methods of funding provision and financing learners, and we have therefore considered in chapters 9 and 10 alternative systems and proposed improvements to the existing financial support system and ways of extending entitlements to educational leave. This will need to be accompanied by changes in legislation to ensure that adequate priority is given to the education of adults and that it is not the first to suffer in times of economic stringency. In the longer term we look to the availability of educational entitlements for all adults throughout their lives.

1.13 The final chapter briefly summarises the case for the creation of a comprehensive system of continuing education and sets out the main lines of action recommended and a broad timetable for their implementation. Policy decisions about the development of continuing education must be placed high on the political agenda of this country over the next twenty years if we are to meet the challenges ahead.

Chapter Two
THE CASE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE

2.1 Economic and social change in Britain over the next twenty years will be shaped by:

- The increasingly rapid application of recently developed technologies: bringing higher productivity and the need for a more skilled and adaptable labour force.
- The changing age structure of the population: the recent decline in the birthrate will lead to a larger proportion of adults in the population and a bigger labour force, among whom there will be more women as family and social structures change.
- The growing capacity of third world countries to manufacture mass produced goods: their low labour costs will continue to erode the traditional manufacturing base of developed countries, whose economies will increasingly depend on technological innovation.

Thus while the work force continues to grow, the new technologies will reduce the demand for labour intensive manufacturing and increase the demand for highly skilled and adaptable workers. At the technological centre of these changes is the silicon 'chip'. Other innovations (for example in biotechnology, fibre optics and nuclear power) will have profound effects, but the 'chip' will produce radical changes in economic activity, in the organisation of industry and commerce, and in the redeployment of the work force.

2.2 The impact of new technologies on employment has still to be fully felt. The speed with which they will be introduced and the scale of their effects are still not clear. The recent advances in 'big science', like nuclear energy and aerospace technology with their slow diffusion within a few major national economies, are unlikely to be repeated. But there can be no certainty in forecasting the economic and social conditions in Britain over the next twenty years. Our overdependence on heavy industry and on a declining manufacturing sector aggravates the economic and social disparities between Southern England and the North, Wales, Northern Ireland and much of industrial Scotland. While we cannot stand aside from international developments, the constraints on rapid change are very real. A slower rate of application of microelectronics in Britain will accentuate the difficulty of structural adjustments in the economy. More

intensive competition will make the British economy more vulnerable to imports and less successful in exports. If Britain fails to match its rate of application with that of its key international competitors, there could be even steeper falls in the gross national product than are now being forecast. Persistent cuts in living standards could have far-reaching social consequences.

2.3 There are four broad possibilities in forecasting the limits of our economic future, which will in turn decide much of the social pattern of society.

- The *collapse of work*, where the rapid diffusion of microprocessor technologies and a permanent shift of growth dynamic to the newly industrialised countries could result in a steady rise of unemployment to over four million.
- *Island Britain*, where import controls and a redirection of oil revenues towards public and social expenditure could bring a return to relatively full employment, but with little growth in living standards.
- *Return to economic growth* with the recreation of employment largely in service industries based on an automated and highly competitive industrial sector.
- An intermediate stage between *return to growth* and *collapse of work*, where a steady adjustment to technological change and a redistribution of employment could lead to a continuing modest growth in the gross national product with the present unemployment levels having become endemic.

2.4 Whichever prediction is fulfilled the current trend towards more leisure through shorter working weeks, longer paid holidays and earlier retirement, will continue. The redistribution of employment opportunities over a larger working-age population will mean more leisure for those in employment. It is also highly likely that many will experience 'enforced' leisure through unemployment. This redistribution of employment could appear in one of a number of different ways.

- Some may expect to have all the paid full-time work and the others none, militating against paid part-time work.
- Everyone could expect to work regularly a shorter week (not necessarily the same as part-time work) of three or four days, with the possible choice of using some of their increased leisure for educational purposes as part of their reduced employment — a form of adult 'day release' scheme.
- Everyone could expect to work a full five day week interspersed with continuous periods of paid time-off (perhaps of

three to six months), some or all of which they might choose to use for educational purposes — a form of sabbatical leave or even 'block release' scheme.

Much will depend on the familiar call for improved productivity so that fewer people will be needed for the same or increased amount of output. This would then permit a further possibility of:

- Sharing paid work among those who want or can have it, enhancing the status of unpaid work for those who prefer it to non-work, and making non-work (or leisure) as creative and satisfying as possible through, for example, educational activities.

Whatever the eventual outcome there are already discernible shifts towards greater individual command of leisure. But leisure, without the mental or financial resources to put it to good use, can be destructive. The educational uses of increased leisure are examined in more detail towards the end of this chapter in relation to opportunities and needs for learning.

2.5 Increasing leisure features in all the forecasts. But there is unlikely to be any real shortage of work in its widest meaning, when we consider, for example, the need for urban renewal and the claims of dependents in the population such as the sick, the old, the disadvantaged, the physically and mentally handicapped, and the children of low paid families. In a materially prosperous society some of this work can be done by trained volunteers, but much of it should properly be done by through the creation of new employment, which will in turn depend on the financial resources provided by an efficient wealth producing sector.

ABILITY TO ADAPT

2.6 The ability to adapt and to acquire new knowledge and skills is going to become increasingly important. In recent years the obsolescence of knowledge has been most marked in the professions. Many professional bodies now encourage, and sometimes require, their members to undertake regular courses of continuing education and professional development. This need for regular updating will broaden across much more of the working population. There is also going to be an increasing demand for retraining as structural shifts in the economy make some jobs redundant and create new ones.

2.7 More vocational updating and retraining cannot be achieved simply by expanding provision. This will be necessary, but it will not be sufficient because much vocational education and

training must depend on the learners having an adequate prior standard of general education.[9] It is doubtful whether the educational standards of the adult population are generally sufficient to provide the necessary base for any substantial increase in successful programmes of updating and retraining. Most of those now working in industry left school at 14 or 15 and many have had little or no further contact with education and only the briefest experience of specific job training. The recent demand for adult literacy tuition has disturbed many, and the current development of adult numeracy tuition is beginning to produce similar disquieting evidence.[10] The number of unemployed people failing the standard entrance tests for many courses in the Training Opportunities Scheme perhaps offers some indication of how ill prepared many adults may be for updating their knowledge or retraining for a new job.

2.8 The ability to acquire new skills and knowledge for work is only one element in adaptability. Equally important are certain generalisable qualities and skills which enable people to take a constructive part in the process of change itself. Achievement at work depends as much on these qualities — a flexible outlook, a willingness to co-operate, an ability to contribute to decision making and to make reasoned judgments — as it does on specific job skills. When these attitudes and abilities are not encouraged, people are more likely to display an unreasoned and unco-operative defensiveness, the opposite of the conditions required for economic success. This exposes the simplistic distinction too often drawn between training and education. Training can no longer be narrowly defined as the acquisition of specific job skills, and education can no longer be regarded simply as a personal benefit. General education, even though not directly related to work, encourages the development of human qualities and skills which can contribute to economic efficiency. Success in adapting to economic change will partly depend on how well these qualities and skills are developed in the working population.

2.9 Since economic activity takes place within the wider sphere of social life, its success relies on the capacity of citizens to help in shaping social as well as economic change. In an increasingly complex society — economically, technologically, politically and socially — with increasingly accessible channels of information, the capacity for change depends as much on social and political literacy as on technical and scientific competence. Hence any future educational policy for adults must not be narrowly concentrated on vocational updating and retraining for the working population. A much broader approach is

needed. While recognising the importance of vocational updating and retraining, this broader approach focusses attention on large sections of the population who, because of their social position or previous educational experience, are least likely to be able to adapt: manual workers, ethnic minorities, young people, the elderly, the disabled, and the largest of these groups — women.

2.10 The social role of women is gradually emerging from the restricted traditional view of their place in society. The present educational provision for girls and women does not recognise the changed status to which they are increasingly aspiring. In school most girls still do not choose to study the sciences; only a small proportion enter for Mathematics O-level examinations and a very small proportion, in comparison with boys, pass A-levels in science subjects. In higher education, although the sexes are more evenly balanced, women are very greatly outnumbered in technical and scientific studies. In vocational education there are far fewer opportunities for young women to obtain day or block release and men generally have far greater opportunities for training in industry. Since vocational continuing education is most often offered in the early years of a career, it is even more difficult for women to compete for skilled work when they seek to re-enter employment. Their lack of technical knowledge and their absence from work while rearing young families at a crucial stage in career formation presents a double handicap. Yet over half of the women of working age are at present in employment and this proportion may be expected to grow, even if their employment prospects in the next twenty years are likely to be weaker than at present. More women will be seeking employment and there will probably be less employment available. When technological and scientific literacy will be increasingly necessary for employment, women with only generalist qualifications will be at a disadvantage, unless they can find the appropriate educational provision to acquire the skills needed to re-enter employment.

2.11 Approximately half of the adult population in Britain has had no further education or training since completing their initial education. Most of these are manual workers who left school at the minimum age. As the productive process becomes more automated, the jobs of many unskilled and semi-skilled manual workers will disappear. To remain in employment they will have to retrain for a new job. Many will have such a poor standard of general education that their ability to retrain successfully will be limited and, unless they can acquire or re-acquire basic educational skills, their employability will diminish. These prospects

are particularly likely for members of ethnic minorities: locked into multiple deprivations of poor housing, poor education and poor employment, they could be severely affected by structural shifts in the economy.

2.12 Another group at risk is the young people in the 16 to 19 age group who are seeking to enter regular employment with few if any educational qualifications. Already there are great difficulties in combatting youth employment and, while this may be mainly due to the current economic recession, it could persist even when the economy begins to grow again. While educational provision for young people is part of the initial education sector rather than continuing education, it will become increasingly important to make more systematic provision for their induction into work. Thereafter continuing education can help those school leavers who reach adulthood without securing employment, to gain the social and vocational skills to increase their job prospects.

2.13 By reducing the amount of labour required, technological change will encourage earlier retirement. There are already 10 million retired people in Britain and their number is increasing by 1,500 a week. They grew up at the time when the provision of initial education was shorter and more limited in its opportunities than it is today, with a school leaving age of 14 or less. The transition from productive work to retirement can create a vacuum which it is not easy for those still fit and active in mind and body to fill. Physical and mental ability can quickly deteriorate unless adequate preparation has been made for this change through encouraging cultural and social activities suitable to much reduced incomes. It is in society's interest to ensure that cultural and social facilities, some of which will be educational, are readily accessible so that retired people can engage in worthwhile activity to promote both individual well being and social usefulness. This is likely to delay the approach of physical and mental deterioration and reduce expenditure on health and social services. With appropriate training and encouragement very many more recently retired people could undertake voluntary work of all kinds including help for the less active elderly.

2.14 A similar argument applies to disabled adults. Education and training specifically tailored to their needs and abilities helps maintain an active and independent life, and lessens the need for other forms of public help. There is further discussion of provision for priority groups in chapter 4.

2.15 When rapid economic and social change puts a high premium on adaptability, the least well equipped to adapt are left behind. The most adaptable, generally the most skilled and the more highly educated, gain the rewards of change. The rest become increasingly 'dependent', leading to the likelihood of growing social discontent and conflict.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

2.16 The problems of a divided society will grow if the current *laissez-faire* approach to the education of adults is allowed to continue. At present adults are assumed to have received sufficient general education during their schooldays to fit them to become free agents in a free educational market. In theory they are free to choose whether and when to continue their education, and in theory their demand is satisfied by an appropriate supply. In practice, however, those with the greatest educational purchasing power dominate the market; it is those with the most initial education who take up the opportunities for continuing education. Vocational education, often equated with notions of economic necessity, is more widely available to the young and to men. General education, usually thought of as a personal benefit, is mainly the preserve of the well educated and of women; and, since it is not regarded as a social or even an economic benefit, it is currently being whittled away as public expenditure is reduced.

2.17 However, as the economic and social forces already reshaping our society gather momentum, the opportunities for adults to continue their education will have to be increased. This will not simply be a matter of adding to the existing *laissez-faire* pattern, which would confer an even greater advantage on those who are already well educated. What is required is comprehensive and systematic provision for continuing education. The provision must be *comprehensive* by offering a wide range of educational opportunities, general as well as vocational, so that each contributes in different ways to the greater adaptability of the population; and by addressing the whole adult population and not simply those whose educational needs are determined by immediate economic circumstances. The provision must also be *systematic* by being based on an analysis of the needs of different sections of the population in the light of economic and social priorities; and by co-ordinating the activities of the many providers in industry, in the public education sector and in other voluntary and statutory bodies so as to ensure a properly balanced provision. The main aim must be to equip the adult population to play an active and constructive part in the process of economic and social change. The widest possible range of

educational methods must be used — from face-to-face group tuition in educational establishments, through distance teaching in the home, to educational activities in the workplace and in societies and clubs — in every way and by every means which achieves the object of reaching out into the whole adult population.

2.18 It may be argued that this vision of an education service, systematically comprehending the needs of the whole adult population, cannot be realised for one simple reason — the lack of demand for education. Adults have after all always been free to choose to continue their education as and when they wanted. The market place analogy suggests that when demand is present, supply is forthcoming; and when demand is not manifest there is no reason to make provision for what is not wanted. But this argument misuses the term 'educational demand'. There are educational wants and needs, which are not easily translated into demands, and in the educational market place a lack of demand may mean nothing more than a lack of appropriate supply to stimulate the latent demand.

2.19 Many educators of adults consider that the present pattern of continuing education far from matches the educational needs and wants within the population. The public adult education sector in particular is generally only able, through its limited and diminishing resources, to meet the demand from those who are most able to articulate their wants and needs — in the main the most educated. The concept of a latent demand for education suggests that the provision of an appropriate supply would energise a demand from those who have not so far engaged in continuing education. The success of adult literacy work and the Open University both support this view. Standing at either end of the education spectrum, each of these innovations has produced a sustained demand from those whose needs were previously unmet and largely unsuspected. Supply, made through a comprehensive and systematic system of continuing education, will trigger the demand to match the educational needs and wants of all sectors of the adult population.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS FOR LEARNING

2.20 The next twenty years will offer great opportunities for establishing a comprehensive system of continuing education. People will be increasingly freed from restrictive working hours and will be much more able to study at times convenient to themselves and their employers. As noted earlier, it remains unclear how the smaller quantity of labour required will be distributed among the adult population, but various possibili-

ties would allow more people to engage more fully in educational opportunities.

2.21 Earlier retirement would withdraw some people from the labour force. By the turn of the century the length of the normal working life may be less than forty years with most people retiring at 60, if not before. Fit and active people may not relish the prospect of retirement, they may have more time to pursue personal interests, but these may be limited by a lower income. As the number of retired people grows, more educational opportunities will be needed to contribute to a full personal life and to the life of the community.

2.22 The next twenty years may well see a continuing decrease in the length of the working week, offering possibilities for a greater expansion in part-time education. There may also be more flexible patterns of work through three or four day working weeks, allowing part-time education on day release arrangements as well as at the end of the working day.

2.23 Paid holidays from work have lengthened considerably in recent years and this trend can be expected to continue. The number of people already making use of part of their holidays for organised study activities could well grow. This suggests an expansion of short full-time courses as, for example, offered now by the short-term adult residential colleges. The main demand will probably be for general education, but this should not exclude vocationally related courses. A variation on longer holidays is the possibility of periods of paid sabbatical leave so that unemployment as well as work is shared. A six month sabbatical for everyone once every five years would reduce the working population by ten per cent. Those on paid leave could undertake voluntary service, retraining, further education or simply have an extended holiday.

2.24 If unemployment continues into the 1980s, at its present high level, much more will need to be done to encourage unemployed adults to widen their knowledge and skills to open up new employment prospects.[11] The present opportunities for unemployed adults to enter education are limited. The Training Opportunities Scheme has been notably successful, although the number of TOPS places has recently been reduced, despite the rapidly rising level of unemployment. Otherwise unemployed adults are offered little encouragement to educate themselves. Indeed eligibility for unemployment pay is affected by attendance at courses for more than a limited number of hours a week. We need many more constructive responses to

help in establishing positive attitudes about the use of unemployed time, and to persuade the employed and the unemployed that to be jobless is not shameful. This could be fostered by offering educational opportunities far more freely to the unemployed — for part-time education which might be continued after return to work or for short full-time courses to be completed while still out of work. This provision need not be exclusively vocational. The active exercise of mental and physical abilities is just as likely to maintain the morale and fitness needed to take on a new job. The educational costs would be relatively small, since the main cost of income support for the unemployed and their families has to be borne out of public funds anyway. The additional cost of providing tuition, often in courses already offered to others, would be more than offset by the benefits to personal adaptability and social cohesion.

AFFORDING CONTINUING EDUCATION

2.25 Can Britain afford to create a comprehensive system of continuing education? The question is more pertinent in reverse: can the country afford not to? The consequences of not providing a much wider and more diverse range of educational opportunities for adults could be serious: with a population insufficiently skilled to develop and exploit new technologies and unable to adapt to the economic and social changes produced by those technologies, with a deepening economic decline from failure to compete in world markets, and with social conflict sharpening as the economy deteriorates. It is not claimed that greatly increased educational and training opportunities for adults will alone reduce or remove these grave possibilities, but the failure to create a comprehensive system of continuing education could limit the national capacity to respond constructively and successfully. The critical question is not, therefore *whether* we can afford to create a comprehensive system of continuing education, but *how* we can make better use of what we do now and extend the range of educational opportunities for adults on a large and effective enough scale to the widest possible benefit of the human resources available for, and in need of, education.

2.26 In considering the increased funding required for continuing education there needs to be a clear statement of principle that it is not valid to argue that public expenditure on education must be reduced because of the decline in the number of children and young people to be educated. This argument fails to take account of the growing educational needs of adults. In further and higher education there is also likely to be a substantial fall in

the overall numbers, if not the proportion, of young people seeking to extend their initial education beyond the minimum school leaving age. Again, this is not a reason for cutting public educational expenditure, but an opportunity to encourage institutions of further and higher education to offer wider access to adults. However, the education at present offered in further and higher education will not always be what adult learners require. Many will undoubtedly seek courses leading to academic and vocational qualifications, but others will want general education as well as non-certificated vocational education. This will certainly be true for those who have to be positively encouraged to return to study, perhaps for the first time since leaving school. If the general education of the least educated sections of the adult population is to be given the priority it deserves, then the allocation of public funds to this sector will need to rise significantly rather than to fall as it is now doing.

2.27 Continuing education should be construed as comprising the wide range of education and training provided for adults through the public education sector, through the vast number of statutory, voluntary and independent bodies, and within industry and commerce. The publicly funded provision should be adaptable to complement and where necessary supplement what is being provided elsewhere. The required level of public expenditure on continuing education can only be decided alongside regular appraisals of the changes in economic and social priorities, of the educational needs of the adult population as a whole, and of the extent to which these needs and priorities are being met by all the providers — public, statutory, voluntary and independent. Thus, an increasingly important function of the local education authorities will be to co-ordinate the range of provision and disseminate information about it, as well as to provide educational opportunities on their own account.

NEED FOR A NATIONAL POLICY

2.28 The Council strongly advocates that a coherent national policy for the promotion of continuing education should be drawn up and put into practice without delay. The technological, economic and social forces that will shape the future are already at work. The present provision of continuing education is addressed predominantly to the better educated; vocational education benefits men far more than women; public expenditure on adult general education has never been large and has recently been reduced. These serious short-comings demand the creation of a comprehensive system of continuing educa-

tion which recognises both the increasing need for vocational updating and retraining and the vital contribution which adult general education can make to national economic livelihood as well as to personal and social life. It is not sufficient simply to satisfy the demands of those who are able to articulate their educational wants and needs. We must reach those very many adults who have not sought out education in the past, many of whom are likely to be the least adaptable and therefore the most vulnerable to future change.

Chapter Three

EDUCATION AFTER SCHOOL — THE PRESENT PATTERN

3.1 Any plan for meeting future needs must start from the educational experience of the adult population and their participation in existing opportunities. The current structure and effect of initial education is similarly important because the present generation of children will soon become the next generation of adults. This report cannot survey the whole range of educational participation among adults, but this chapter presents some information as a background to the later chapters.

INITIAL EDUCATION: THE FOUR MAIN ROUTES

3.2 When young people have completed their compulsory schooling at the age of sixteen, they follow one of four main educational routes.

- They obtain employment and end their education.
- They obtain employment and are periodically released from work to acquire the skills and qualifications of their occupation.
- They continue in full-time education for a further year or two, at school or in a further education college, and gain additional academic or vocational qualifications and experience before entering employment. The recently anounced government policy to fund education and training for all unemployed school leavers suggests that many more will follow this route in future.
- They stay at school or transfer to a further education college for two or three years and then go into higher education, staying in full-time initial education for another three years to gain degrees or high level qualifications. A few will continue beyond this to obtain postgraduate qualifications.

3.3 These may all be regarded as the final stages of initial education. It is not easy to estimate accurately the proportions of the population which pass along those different routes, but published figures [12] indicate that:

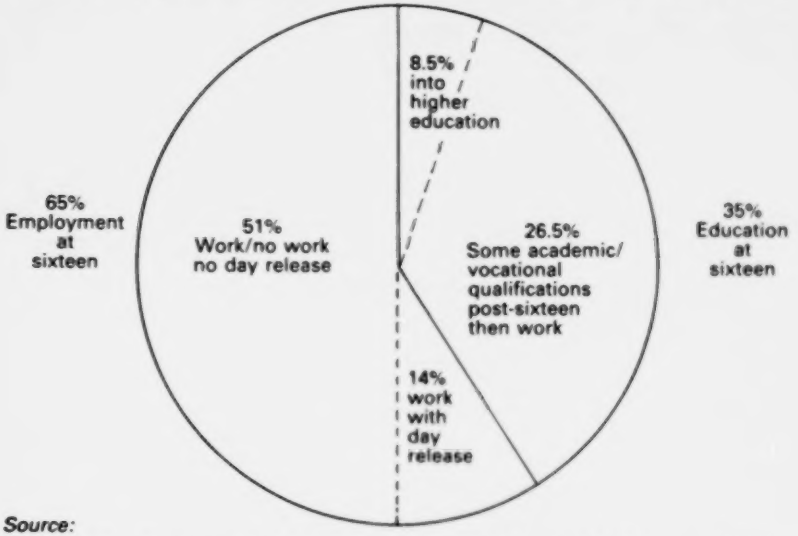
- Nearly two out of three of all young people (65% in 1977) leave school at sixteen and do not go on to any form of full-time further or higher education.
- About 15% of young people leave school at sixteen without any formal qualifications at all. One in five (21% of all school leavers) gain at least one GCE O-level or its equivalent, and a

further 29% gain at least one CSE pass. Thus it is largely those with low academic results who leave for employment at sixteen. Of these early leavers, less than a quarter continue with release from work for part-time study.

- Thirty-five per cent stay in full-time education after sixteen. About 17% study for A-levels (15.5% in schools and 1.5% in further education colleges). A further 9.5% take or re-take O-levels or CSE examinations. Another 8.5% take vocational courses. The rigid boundaries between courses normally taken at school and normally taken in colleges are increasingly breaking down and students may now be found taking either type of course in either type of institution.

- Just over a quarter (26.5%) of all sixteen year-olds follow the third route and obtain some additional vocational or academic qualifications before entering employment. Only one in twelve takes the fourth route directly into higher education.

FIGURE 1. DESTINATIONS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES 1977



Source:

Central Policy Review staff, *Education, Training and Industrial Performance* (1980)

3.4 It is similarly not easy to match the figures for the destinations of school-leavers in any one year with the figures for entry to higher education, for two main reasons. First, the destination figures do not include those who enter higher education after a

period at work or after attending a non-advanced further education course. Second, the figures only record the proportion of those going on to degree and teacher training courses, yet over half the full-time students in polytechnics and other non-university institutions are studying for comparable high level non-degree professional or vocational qualifications. Thus the proportion of young people entering higher education in any given year is larger than the figures in Figure 1 suggest. The Department of Education and Science in calculating the 'age participation rate' for higher education includes all those who enter full-time or sandwich higher education before their twenty-first birthday. This participation rate grew throughout the 1960s to a high point of 14.2% in the early 1970s, but turned down in the late '70s. In its discussion document *Higher Education into the 1990s,*[13] the DES projected a return to an increasing age participation rate in the early 1980s. This increase has not in fact taken place, and the current government policy is not to encourage increased participation but to cut back the number of places in higher education. The current cohort, which is the largest for many years, is therefore finding significantly fewer opportunities for higher education.

3.5 Figure 1 does not show the sex and social class differences in the take up of initial education. For example, four times as many young men receive part-time vocational education on leaving school as do young women, largely because the agreements covering educational release from work apply to industries such as construction and engineering, which employ many more men than women. Statistics suggest that up to the age of sixteen sex discrimination has largely disappeared, except for the low proportion of girls studying in some subject areas. Sex differences between the numbers of entries and passes at O-level are insignificant. Beyond that level, however, the position changes. Fewer of the girls who pass five O-levels or their equivalent go on to take A-levels, but the numbers entering degree courses conform exactly to the difference in the sexes at A-level — the girls who do go on to A-levels continue into higher education. As a result men outnumber women overall in higher education in the ratio of 59 to 41. There is a strong tendency for highly qualified girls to move into further rather than higher education, often on relatively low level courses and in a very limited number of subject areas.

3.6 An optimistic view of the current situation might suggest that there is a movement towards equalisation. A pessimistic view would suggest that surprisingly little progress has been made, despite the apparent opportunities, in breaking down sexual

differentiation in types of courses and subject specialisation. A strong influence here may be parental attitudes and expectations. Whatever the cause, and it now appears that the reasons are primarily social and cultural rather than educational, the consequences of this imbalance must affect the future pattern of women's educational needs.

3.7 The phenomenon of 'social class', as it affects education in this country, is extremely powerful — and also extremely difficult to define. Much as the concept is attacked, it continues to be the main discriminator used in most social and educational analyses. There is clearly a relationship between social class and educational opportunity. The Robbins Committee report[14] noted in 1963 that there was a *"vast mass whose performance both at entry to higher education and beyond, depends greatly on how they have lived and been taught beforehand"*. Middle class children were shown at that time to have a far greater chance of entering higher education than their working class contemporaries. For entry to universities, this pattern has not effectively changed over the past twenty years. The 1966 and 1971 censuses showed that just under two-thirds of economically active males were employed in manual work, but their children have consistently obtained less than a third of the first degree places in universities. The development of the polytechnics seems not to have improved opportunities for working class children. A national survey of polytechnic students[15] found that 60% of all students had fathers in non-manual occupations. For students on degree courses the figure was 64%. The tendency for polytechnics to discontinue lower level and part-time courses is likely to worsen the situation.

3.8 A series of studies have investigated this problem, the most recent of which concluded that: *"Our evidence holds no comfort for those who believe that class differences in educational attainment reflect a fair distribution of opportunities to those with the intellectual ability or cultural capacity to profit therefrom ... wastage of talent continues and was massive over most of the period (birth cohorts 1913-52) with which we are concerned"*.[16] The authors suggested that by the 1970s at least 7,000 more boys each year could have obtained A-level passes, had they remained at school long enough to do so. Further back in time, wastage was much greater: they estimated that in the early '60s it was running at an annual rate of around 30,000 and in the early '50s well over 40,000. Their conclusion is that the proportion of working class boys now qualifying for university entrance *"could comfortably be doubled without any lowering*

of standards". This study unfortunately did not include women. Had it done so, a similar analysis for girls might have been even more striking. Table 1 shows some of the statistical evidence on which the authors based their judgement. By 1972, the latest date for which they offer figures, the working class (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers in industry and agriculture) comprised approximately 55% of the population, while the service class (professional people, administrators and managers) made up under 14%. Yet the pattern of their children's education was dramatically different.

TABLE 1 Distribution of educational opportunities between working class boys and service class boys, 1972

	% Working class boys	% Service class boys
Entering selective secondary education	23.7	71.9
Proceeding to 'O' level	11.8	58.1
Proceeding to 'A' level	2.8	26.9
Entering university/polytechnic	1.8	20.1

Source: Halsey, Heath and Ridge, *Origins and Destinations* (1980)

3.9 It might be argued that since intelligent children are more commonly born to intelligent parents and that since the majority of intelligent parents are found in the service class, these disparities are not surprising. This objection has to be tempered with the finding that the IQ threshold for entry to university from the service class was 120.8 and from the working class 127.4. Thus on average a working class boy needed an IQ 6.6 points higher than a service class boy to have the same chance of entering university. The difference in IQ for staying on at school beyond the age of sixteen was even larger at 10.3. These disparities are to some extent modified by entry into part-time further education. However, it is only in the youngest cohort studied (children born between 1943 and 1952) that the proportion of working class boys exceeded the proportion of service class boys entering this form of education; and the working class entry was still proportionately lower than that of children from the intermediate class (clerical workers, small proprietors and self-employed lower grade technicians and foremen), who make up just over 31% of the population.

3.10 People in ethnic minority groups are also disadvantaged in their initial education. It has been difficult to assess this with any

statistical precision in the past, and the decision to omit questions about ethnic origins from the 1981 census will make it no less difficult in the future. But they are clearly under-represented at all levels of post-school education, in further, adult and higher education, and this disparity in educational opportunities cannot continue to be ignored.

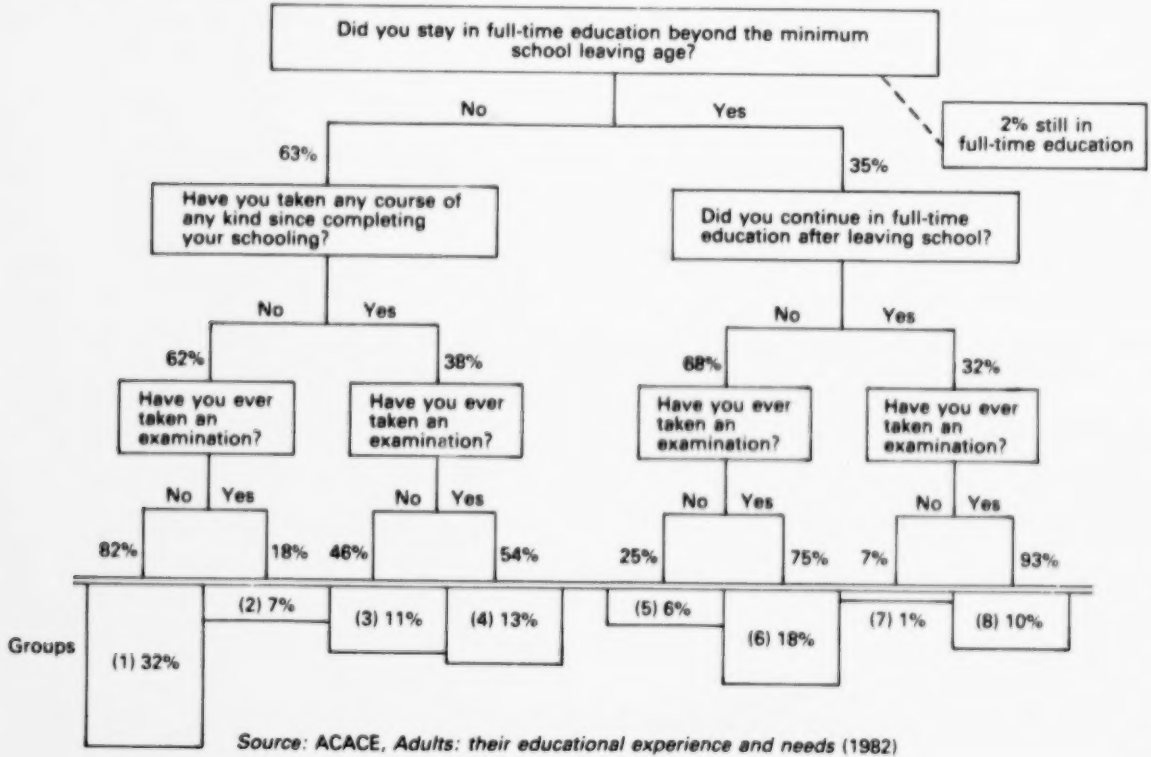
3.11 This brief review shows that many young people are completing their initial education at a low level of attainment and that some have had much more restricted access to educational opportunities than others. This has implications both for their ability to take advantage of existing opportunities, and for their future needs. It is, after all, these young people who will be the men and women needing and wanting education into the next century.

AN EDUCATIONAL PROFILE OF THE ADULT POPULATION

3.12 The full picture of the pattern of adults' educational experience is not of course revealed by an analysis of current initial education among the young. Many adults, especially those over the age of forty, have had far less access to education than their children. There have been great changes since the 1944 Education Act: the minimum school leaving age has been raised twice, secondary education has been firmly established and re-organised, vocational further education has been substantially developed, and since the 1960s the opportunities for higher education have increased greatly. Some adults with little initial education have been able to take advantage of later opportunities, but many have not and remain under-educated by any standard. Thus any understanding of the patterns of education within the adult population needs to include information on their initial education *and* on their later educational experiences throughout the various stages of adulthood.

3.13 To obtain this kind of profile, which cannot be derived from existing statistics, the Council commissioned a national survey of the educational history, current experience and future needs of the adult population in England and Wales.[17] This survey was carried out in 1980 through structured personal interviews with a statistically validated sample of 2,460 adults aged seventeen to seventy-five. The results provide a wealth of information previously not available on the educational experience of the adult population. The survey data provides a classification of the educational history of different sections of the population, shown in Figure 2, which divides the population into eight main groups — from those with little or no education-

FIGURE 2. EDUCATIONAL HISTORY: A CLASSIFICATION OF THE ADULT POPULATION



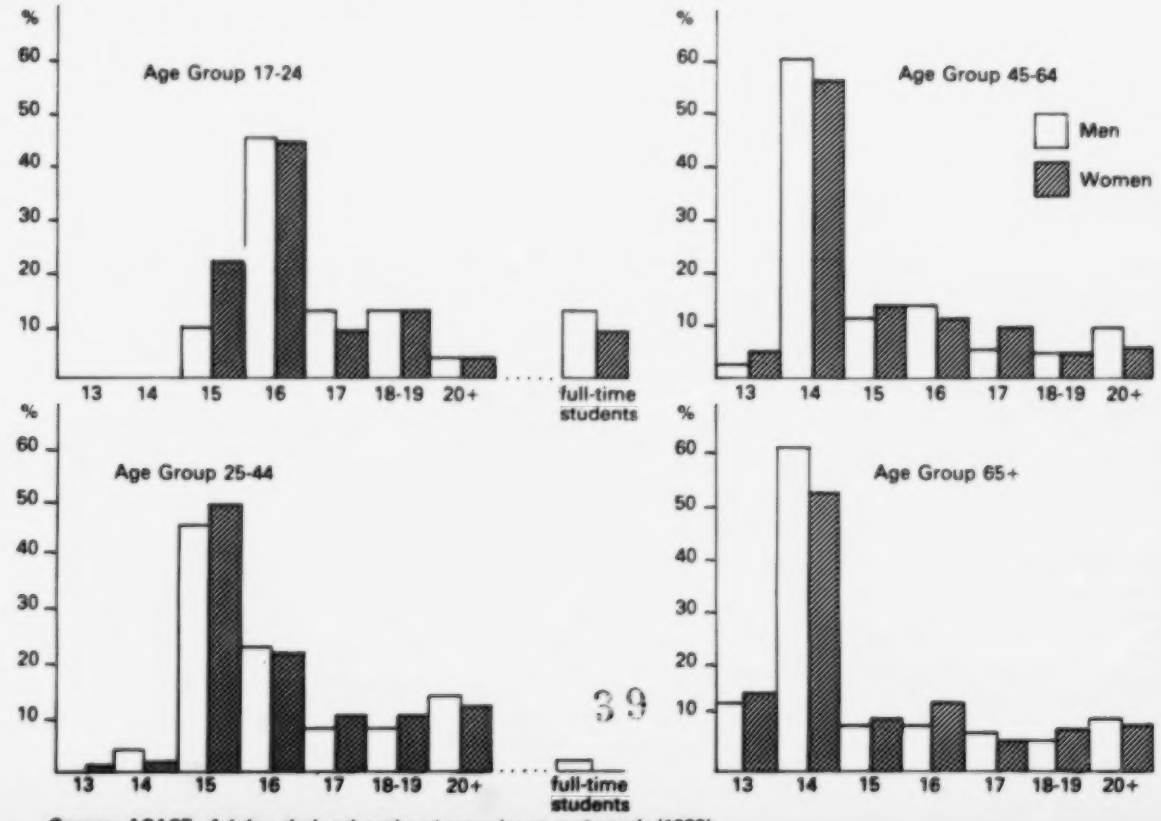
Source: ACACE, *Adults: their educational experience and needs* (1982)

al experience as adults to those with a great deal. This indicates that approximately one adult in three in England and Wales left school at the minimum leaving age, has had no form of education or training thereafter, and has never taken any examination: at the other end of the scale only one adult in ten has extended their initial education *full-time* beyond school. These disparities of educational experience are even wider than Figure 2 suggests, since this does not take account of the differences related to sex and social class. For example, while the minimum school leaving age was lower for those over forty-five, more of them, particularly the men, left school at the minimum age than did the younger groups. Only about a quarter of those in the higher social classes left school at the minimum age, but about three quarters of social classes C_2, D and E left at that age.

3.14 A clearer picture of these disparities emerges in Figures 3 and 4. These show, for instance, that the majority of men and women aged forty-five and over left school at fourteen. In the twenty-five to forty-four age group the largest number of men, and the majority of women, left school at fifteen, while amongst the under twenty-fives the largest number left at sixteen. This, of course, reflects the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen in 1947 and to sixteen in 1972. But the figures also reflect the increasing opportunities for staying on at school in recent years. The largest proportion of those completing full-time education between seventeen and nineteen are to be found among the under twenty-fives and then in the twenty-five to forty-four age group. For those completing full-time education over the age of twenty, men outnumber women in every age group; and this is still true for the under twenty-fives, where the figures for those still in full-time education need to be included. Men have consistently outnumbered women in full-time education beyond school.

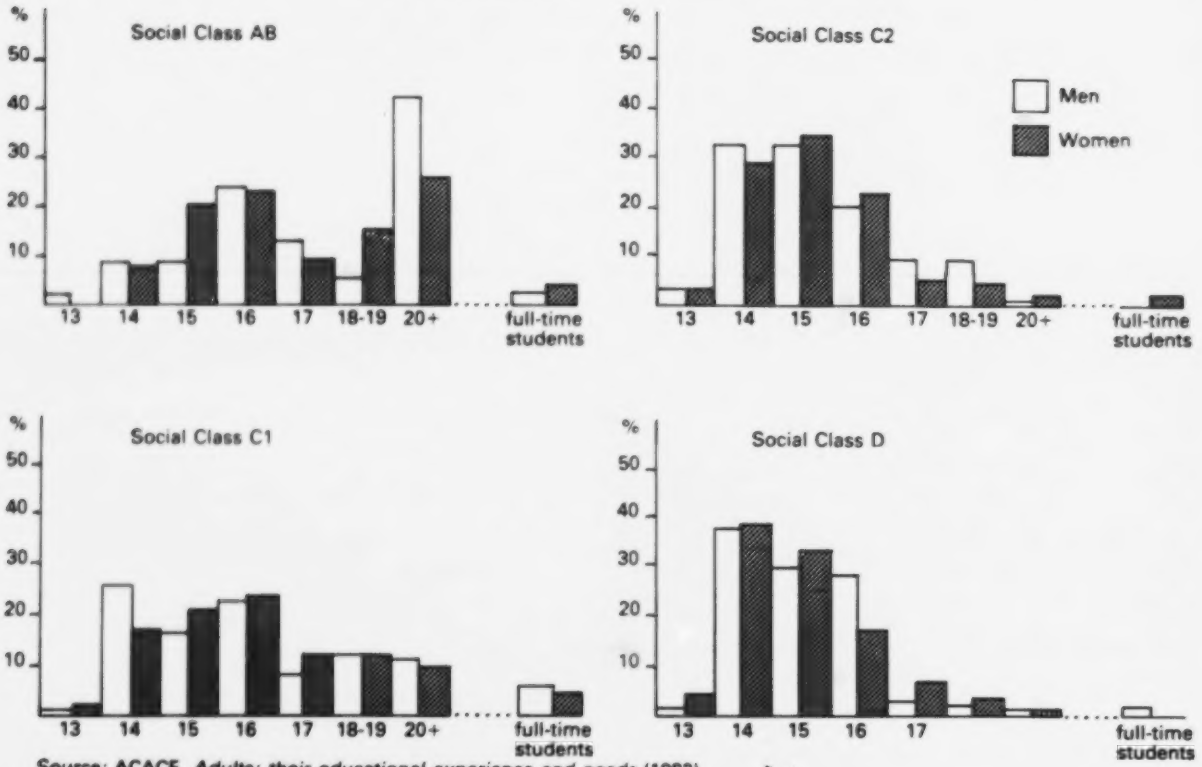
3.15 The analysis by social class also shows consistently that a larger proportion of those in the lower social classes left school early than those in the higher social classes. Particularly striking is the fact that 42% of men in social classes A and B did not leave full-time education until the age of twenty or over. Similarly 26% of the women in these social classes continued into full-time education beyond school and 14% (compared with only 5% of the AB men) did not leave until the age of eighteen or nineteen. Care is needed in interpreting the data on social class since it is the *current* social class of the adult that has been recorded, and this may have changed over the life span. Although there is evidence that the children of parents in the higher social classes

FIGURE 3. AGE ON LEAVING FULL-TIME EDUCATION, BY AGE GROUPS



Source: ACACE, *Adults: their educational experience and needs* (1982)

FIGURE 4. AGE ON LEAVING FULL-TIME EDUCATION, BY SOCIAL CLASS



Source: ACACE, *Adults: their educational experience and needs* (1982)

have greater opportunities for extending their initial full-time education, Figure 4 should not necessarily be interpreted in that way. It could just as easily be argued that many adults reach a high social class through their greater educational experience rather than through being born and brought up in that class. However, the figures do show, not surprisingly, that those whose full-time initial education extended beyond the minimum school leaving age and beyond school are more generally to be found in the higher social classes.

3.16 The survey also provided information on regional variations. In Greater London, the South East and the West Midlands fewer adults proportionately left school early and more finished their full-time education later: the converse applies in East Anglia and the North. Throughout the survey on almost every indicator of the quality and quantity of educational experience, Greater London, the South East and the West Midlands are consistently ranked highest and the North and East Anglia lowest. This does not necessarily mean that the educational facilities in some regions are better than others, although this may be so. It could equally be that Greater London, the South East and the West Midlands have been the most prosperous regions to which the more highly educated naturally gravitate in search of suitable jobs. However, these variations do suggest that, since there are noticeable regional differences in the educational profiles of the population, the policies for providing appropriate opportunities for adults to continue their education may have to differ in their regional emphases.

3.17 This profile of the distribution of educational opportunities among the adult population shows that the younger generations have received more education than the older generations, men have taken greater advantage than women of full-time education after school, and those in the higher social classes have received proportionately more education than those in the lower social classes. It also shows a greater concentration of the more educated in some regions. This picture remains incomplete because it does not take account of the educational opportunities available to adults after the completion of their initial period of full-time education: information on the pattern of participation in continuing education and training needs to be added. This can be done in two ways through examining the main types of provision for adults to continue their education, and the use made of that provision from the available statistics or from direct enquiry among adults. Both sources need to be used to achieve some reasonably clear picture of the adult population's experience of both initial education and educa-

tional opportunities later in life. The following section surveys the current range of provision of education and training for adults. It is not possible to make a clear separation between education and training, or between continuing education in industry and commerce and in the public education sector. Therefore there is inevitably some overlap in the statistics quoted.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Industrial training

3.18 At present the best opportunities for adults to continue their education, while maintaining a satisfactory level of income, are available through industrial training. In initial and up-dating training within industry, employees are generally released from work to attend training courses within the company itself or at outside establishments specialising in vocational training and education, either on part-time release over an extended period or through short full-time courses. The amount of training and the types of employees receiving it varies from industry to industry, largely because of the differing technological requirements and the changing economic position in each industry. Among manual workers, it is foremen, supervisory staff and skilled workers who generally benefit most from industrial training and paid leave. Among non-manual workers, it is technicians, technologists, and scientific and professional staff who seem to benefit even more than line management, while clerical and white collar workers receive little. Younger employees generally benefit more than their older colleagues, and men more than women. Much of the training is highly job-specific, especially among the lower grades; release for general education is extremely rare. Only in management and the professions does training sometimes show the characteristics more commonly associated with educational provision, such as residential courses and curricula aimed at developing more than specific skills.

3.19 This simply reflects the fact that employers and Industrial Training Boards broadly determine the amount and type of training required and the main recipients of that training, in accordance with their understanding of the needs of their industry. Employees ultimately receive their training through the initiative, or with the approval of, their employer. Because the training is undertaken on these terms, the financial support offered is generally full wages or salary plus any tuition or maintenance costs. However, the position is not always as clear

cut as this, particularly where employees seek training not apparently directly beneficial to their employment. Much then depends on employers' attitudes whether employees are released from employment and at what level of financial support.

Paid release from work

3.20 This is one of the main ways through which adults can continue their education after the completion of their initial education. Until recently it has been almost impossible even to hazard a guess at the number of adults taking this type of educational opportunity, but a recent report, *Education and Work*, which studied paid educational leave in England and Wales in 1976-77[18] estimates that three to four million adults received paid release from work for some form of education. This estimate, representing some 15 to 20% of the working population, may appear high in comparison with other figures. Since the figures for the study had to be compiled from a variety of disparate sources, it would still seem to be very difficult to obtain any precise assessment.

3.21 The *National Training Survey*[19], published in 1980, provides perhaps the most accurate current estimate of the extent to which training has been undertaken, covering as it did over 54,000 people. Training was very broadly defined as *"anything which may have helped you do the work"*. This definition covered all types of vocational courses, both on and off the job, but excluded academic courses at colleges. Over 60% of the respondents said they had undertaken some form of training during their working life (three-quarters of the men compared with half of the women) and almost half of this had been on the job. This implies that 11.5 million men and 7.5 million women in the working population had received some training. The older people in the sample had received less training than the average. The *Survey* does clearly show a general increase in training activity in recent years. The Council's own survey[20] also provides a measure of work-related education and training through its question *"have you done any kind of study, learning or practising, part-time, full-time, at work or elsewhere since you completed your full-time education?"* Nine per cent replied that they had undertaken some work-related education or training in the last three years.

3.22 A further measurement is the duration of training. The *National Training Survey* looked at both the number of training courses and their length, and found that the courses for which people are released from work are generally fairly short: about half of the training courses for men and two-thirds of those for women

lasted less than thirteen weeks. The average length of courses also varied among industries, although within the same industry women attended shorter courses than men. The *Education and Work* study reported that the average length of most company training courses was six days, and twelve days for those provided by outside institutions, with about a third of the courses being provided by outside institutions.

3.23 The same study[18] reported that paid release from work was given almost exclusively for vocational purposes: about 90% of all courses were directly vocational in character and, when industrial relations and health and safety training were included, virtually all in-house company training was of this kind. Over half of the courses and 42% of the students were aiming at vocational qualifications as an extension of their initial work training. With the exception of studies in subjects relevant to trades unionists, there was evidence of only a very small amount of paid release from work for any other purpose than vocational education and training. Pre-retirement education was the only form of education serving no occupational purpose, and the study found this only for very small numbers of people. Even education for trades unionists amounted to only 1% of the total volume of education offered.

3.24 The evidence suggests that paid release from work for training is fairly common, but it is clear that this does not constitute what is generally understood by the term paid educational leave, the essence of which is that it establishes individual rights to:

- Some form of education or training, not necessary related to current employment.
- Appropriate support without financial disadvantage.
- Return to the same employment on the same conditions.

These criteria rarely apply in Britain, even for the well established initial vocational training system of day and block release. There are statutorily based examples (release of 'safety' representatives) or examples based on collective agreements (release of shop stewards), but the number of people covered by such measures, and the amount of education they may claim, is small. In industrial training those educational opportunities which carry some guarantee of adequate financial support for learners are provided either in accordance with the perceived needs of the employers or arise from obligations in the contract of employment. There are otherwise very few opportunities for employees to pursue the education of their choice with financial support from their employers.

3.25 The *Education and Work* study showed that paid release from work was largely distributed according to occupation. For in-company training the rate of release for managers, scientific and professional workers was one in five, for supervisors one in three, and for clerical workers and manual workers one in eight. Administrators, managers and professional, scientific and technical workers (constituting 15% of the working population) took at least half of the course places provided by outside institutions. Some occupational categories had very low rates of release, usually those which coincidentally include the traditional fields of female employment — sales, service and clerical work.

3.26 This study also confirmed the *National Training Survey* finding that paid release is significantly related to age, especially in the provision offered outside the work place. Those under thirty were eight or nine times more likely to receive leave outside their employers' premises than those over fifty. In addition, the types of courses where the young predominate, those leading to awards, required significantly more attendance than those where there is a more balanced age distribution. The long odds against older employees stem from their having received initial training when young and from their having already achieved such promotion as they were likely to get: their career development is ended. Thus the young receive more paid release from work both because of the massive predominance of extended initial work training and because training for promotion is mostly available for those in their 'early middle careers'.

3.27 The *Education and Work* study reported that men were almost three times as likely as women to obtain paid release. Two in five workers are female, but only one in six of those released to attend college is a woman. Men receive more paid release because they are in occupations where it is more frequently given for vocational purposes in extended initial work training, for example in engineering, and later in life as managers and professional workers. The apparent discrimination against women results from their place within the occupational structure. A recent study on *Women at Work*[21], surveying employers' practices, confirmed some of these general findings, but indicated that the *Education and Work* study may have understated the level of in-service training undertaken by women: a third of the men and a quarter of the women were recorded as taking advantage of training opportunities. Women were under-represented in the more expensive and significant off the job training where they accounted for only 22% of the training undertaken. Women fill a high proportion of places in

initial training schemes for professional intermediate and junior non-manual and personal service workers, but these account for only 15% of training. The study described their participation in training for management and for skilled trades as "derisory".

Training Opportunities Scheme (TOPS)

3.28 This scheme, which enables adults not in employment to train or retrain for a new job, began in 1971. It became the responsibility of the Manpower Services Commission in 1972 and has been run by its Training Services Division since 1978. TOPS developed rapidly. In 1971 about 15,500 people were trained under the scheme (96% of them men), 94,162 completed TOPS courses in 1977 and the aim was for over 100,000 completions each year thereafter. These expansion plans have recently been revised because of the attempts to restrain public expenditure and the redirection of resources towards the growing numbers of unemployed school leavers. About 70,000 people were able to train or retrain under the scheme in 1978-79.

3.29 TOPS courses are housed in government skill centres, in employing establishments and in institutions of further and higher education. In 1971 some 83% of the trainees were trained in skill centres, but there has been a consistent policy of promoting courses through the further and higher education sectors, so that by 1977 about 56% of the trainees were trained in these publicly maintained institutions, 19% in employers' premises and 25% in skill centres. Anyone over the age of nineteen may seek a TOPS award to attend a training course for up to one year, usually full-time. Normally candidates should not have been in full-time education during the preceding three years and should not have taken a TOPS course in the previous five years. They must also be suitably qualified to enter their proposed course of instruction. There are otherwise few restrictions on entry.

3.30 Most of the courses offer specific vocational training spanning the wide range from high level training for managers, administrators, scientists, technologists, and engineers to a variety of semi-skilled occupations. The largest groups of trainees in 1977 were for clerical and secretarial work (15.9%) and for other non-manual jobs (15.7%); high level management training accounted for 4.4% of the trainees. There are more general courses: transfer of employment courses for redundant executives, courses to help in the choice of appropriate occupations, wider opportunities courses for women wishing to return to employment, preparatory courses to improve basic literacy and

numeracy skills in preparation for entry into employment and further training, and courses for the disabled.

3.31 In the years since TOPS began there has been a large shift in the composition of the population of trainees. By 1977 the balance between the sexes had changed markedly and 43% of the trainees were women. Most women were trained for clerical and secretarial occupations, accounting for 76% of all women trained in 1977, when the proportion of women being trained in high level courses had risen to 18% of the total. Although the number of women training (usually in skill centres) in non-conventional fields such as motor vehicle repair, carpentry and engineering has been slowly increasing, this group represented less than 2% of all women TOPS trainees and only 2.5% of the skill centre population. Seven per cent of the trainees were from ethnic minorities. Disabled people made up 5.5% of the total number of trainees.

3.32 The Training Opportunities Scheme has been one of the few significant educational innovations in the 1970s and has had a considerable effect on the development of course provision in the public education sector, particularly in further education colleges. Although TOPS provides awards to individuals to train for a new job, it does not confer a general right to training or retraining. Its purpose is to train for the requirements of the labour market. The scale and types of opportunities made available are determined primarily by the MSC's analysis of the economic needs of each region, of employers' demands and of the manpower levels required within the resources available.

FURTHER EDUCATION

3.33 Further education in all its forms is a very important provider of education for adults. Table 2 shows the totals of all enrolments between 1977 and 1979 in all forms of further education, including adult education. Between three and a half and four million students enrolled each year, most studying part-time and roughly half of them attending adult education and youth centres. To obtain comparable published figures for all forms of continuing education 1978 has been taken as the baseline year for drawing conclusions about the total number of adult enrolments. These figures have fluctuated in recent years. Enrolments on part-time courses in major establishments (ie excluding adult education and youth centres) fell from 1,545,000 in 1975 to 1,393,000 in 1977, rose again in 1978 to 1,482,000, and in 1979 fell again to 1,393,000 — almost the same figures as in 1977. In the adult education centres the pattern has been similar, although the size of the changes has been much

greater. Enrolments grew by 17% in 1978 to reach just over two million for the first time, although there is some doubt about the actual size of the increase since the recording method had been changed that year and the increase may consequently have been over-estimated by some 2%. In 1979 the numbers declined by 8% to under 1.85 million, almost the same as in 1974. Some of this decrease may be a consequence of the increase in tuition fees, but in some local education authorities the numbers have fallen significantly as a result of reduced provision.

TABLE 2 Enrolments at all further education establishments, England and Wales 1977-79

	Enrolments (thousands)		
	1977	1978	1979
Major Establishments			
Full-time and Sandwich Courses			
Men	248	249	245
Women	248	250	251
All	497	499	496
Part-time Courses			
Men	754	790	766
Women	639	690	627
All	1393	1480	1393
Adult Education and Youth Centres			
Men	538	621	571
Women	1170	1384	1276
All	1708	2005	1847

Source: Department of Education and Science

3.34 The picture is clearer in the major establishments where there has been a noticeable growth in the number of adult students in recent years. The changes in the major establishments between 1968 and 1978, given in Table 3, may be misleading in showing an overall increase of 77% in enrolments: the raising of the school leaving age to sixteen in 1972 reduced the fifteen to seventeen age group in further education establishments which emphasized the relative growth in the numbers of the twenty-one or overs. Over a quarter of all the students in the major establishments (and that is over half the students aged 21 or over) attend only in the evenings. This demonstrates the extent to which evening study represents the main educational opportunity for the great mass of adults in employment, although it is acknowledged that the figures for sandwich courses and for part-time day courses included many adults released from work.

TABLE 3 Enrolments in major establishments of further education, 1968 and 1978

	1968 total students	1968 % of total	1978 total students	1978 % of total	Increase/ decrease as % of 1968
All students	1,853,326	(100)	1,980,781	(100)	+ 7
Students twenty-one or over:					
Full-time	93,504	(5)	138,663	(7)	+ 48
Sandwich	13,740	(1)	27,872	(1)	+103
Part-time day	224,974	(12)	326,172	(17)	+ 45
Evening only	543,222	(29)	540,701	(27)	− 1
	875,440	(47)	1,033,403	(52)	+ 18

Source: Department of Education and Science

3.35 The figures for polytechnics in Table 4 produce a similar picture, although probably a sizeable proportion of the figures for full-time and sandwich course students aged 21 or over were third or fourth year students who had entered study more or less direct from school. Thus the part-time route, both day and evening, is more significant even than the percentages of 79 and 91 indicate. Between 1974 and 1978 there were increases of 47% in full-time enrolments, 40% in sandwich courses and 33% in part-time day courses, but evening enrolments fell by 18%. It is not clear whether this fall reflected a lack of demand, or whether the demand was being met in other ways.

TABLE 4 Enrolments in polytechnics, England and Wales 1977

	(1) All Students	(2) 21 or over	(3) Students 21 or over (2) as a percentage of (1)	(4) Students 21 or over as a percentage of all total student body
Full-time	81,833	47,893	58	23
Sandwich	38,254	20,890	55	10
Part-time day	61,170	48,580	79	24
Evening only	24,739	22,555	91	11
	205,996	139,918		68

Source: Department of Education and Science

3.36 The enrolment fluctuations since 1977 have not favoured adults. After the general increase in 1978, the enrolment of students aged 16 to 18 on full-time and part-time day courses continued to rise in 1979 and, while the increases were not as great as in previous years, each represented the same proportion of the age group as in 1978. The number of young people enrolled on evening courses fell back to the 1976 and 1977 levels and older students fared particularly badly: the number aged 21 or over fell by more than 50,000 and the decrease in enrolment was particularly marked in evening courses, and in part-time day courses for those not on paid release from work.

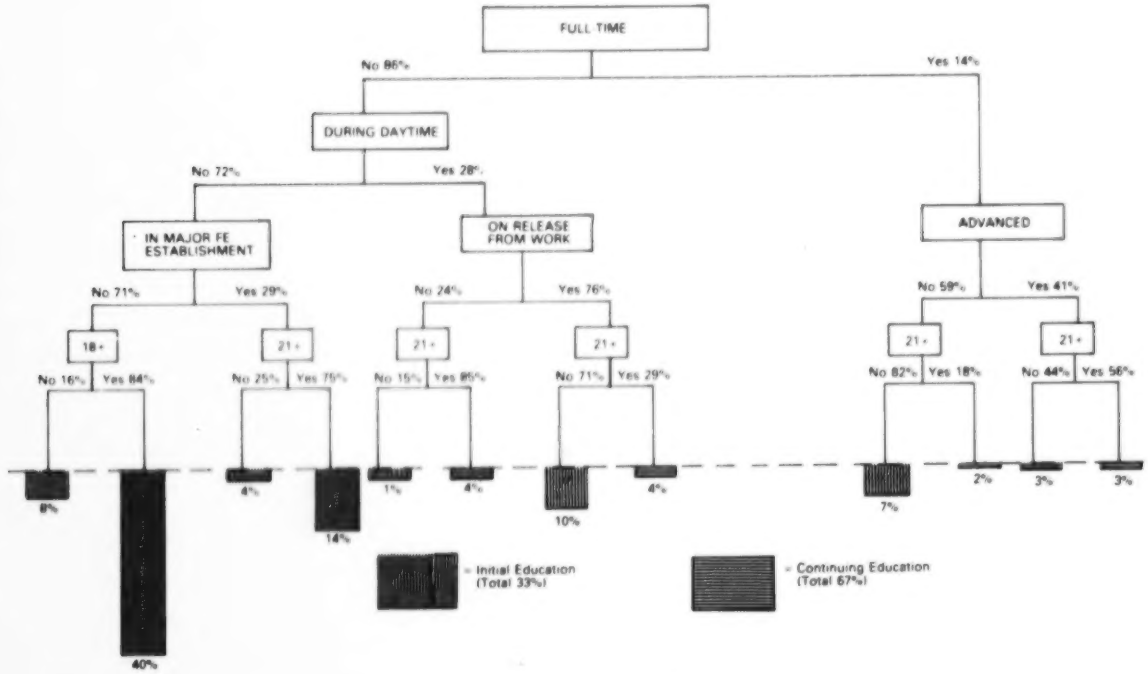
TABLE 5 Enrolments at adult education and youth centres, 1978

Advanced Courses		
Professional qualifications	28	
Other advanced	235	263
Non Advanced		
GCE	51,383	
City and Guilds	909	
Other specified	3,368	55,660
Unspecified		1,949,120
All courses		2,005,043
of which		
Students aged under 18 (including under 16's)		359,405
Students aged 18 or over		1,645,638

Source: Department of Education and Science

3.37 Although large numbers of adults study in the major further education establishments, most of those who continue their education in the public education sector are to be found learning part-time, usually in the evenings, in adult education centres. Table 5 shows that in 1978 there were nearly 1.65 million enrolments of students aged 18 or over, an increase of 0.24 million over the previous year's total. Very few of these were studying for advanced qualifications, a larger but still very small minority were studying for non-advanced qualifications, and the remaining 97% were undertaking a wide variety of study not leading to any qualifications. The figures for those aged 18 or over have to be used here because there are no figures available for those aged 21 or over in this sector. This should be noted in any comparison between, or aggregation of, the figures in Table 5 and in Tables 3 and 4, although any alteration which may be needed in Table 5 to exclude those aged between 18 and 20 is likely to be relatively small.

FIGURE 5. PATTERNS OF STUDY IN LEA FURTHER AND ADULT EDUCATION, ENGLAND AND WALES 1978



3.38 Figure 5 brings together the information in Tables 3, 4 and 5 to distinguish the proportions of initial education and continuing education students in the local education authorities' further education sector in 1978. It shows that two thirds of these students (67%) were continuing their education in some way, while the remaining one third were young people extending their initial education after little or no interruption from leaving school. Thus, measured in student numbers, the LEA further education service was heavily engaged in providing continuing education. But over half of the total number of students (54%) were adults studying part-time in the evenings and the majority of them (40%) were enrolled in adult education centres. It is also noticeable that while young people outnumbered adults in educational release from work (10% and 4% respectively) and in full-time non-advanced further education (7% and 2% respectively), young people were outnumbered by adults in other part-time day courses (1% and 4% respectively), and were equally balanced in advanced full-time and sandwich courses (3% each).

3.39 There are other substantial adult educational programmes maintained or assisted by local education authorities and by central government through the short-term residential colleges, the direct grant colleges (providing long-term residential courses for a relatively small number of adults), and the Responsible Bodies (university extra-mural departments, the Workers Educational Association's districts, and the Welsh National Council of the Young Men's Christian Association). These offer a wide variety of courses, both in subject areas and in duration, for substantial numbers of adults (Tables 6 and 7).

UNIVERSITIES

3.40 Study for university first degrees in this country, with the exception of the Open University and Birkbeck College, is almost entirely confined to full-time attendance[22]. Part-time students are one in eleven of the student population, and the great majority of these are postgraduate students: part-time undergraduates make up only about 1% of all university first degree students. While the polytechnics are not much ahead of the universities in offering part-time undergraduate study, this mode of study is relatively more common in the LEA higher education sector, although many of the part-time students in polytechnics are on release from work to take courses leading to vocational qualifications rather than degrees.

3.41 Most university first degree and postgraduate students are completing their initial education. About 60% of the full-time

TABLE 6 Residential colleges and centres of adult education, academic year 1978-79

Colleges and centres maintained or assisted by LEAs	
Number of establishments	39
Number of students by duration of course —	
Less than 4 days	64,729
4 days but less than 7 days	18,901
7 days but less than 14 days	3,982
14 days or more	131
All courses	87,743
Direct grant colleges	
Number of colleges	7
Number of students by duration of course —	
Less than 1 year	Nil
1 year	10
2 years	440
All courses	450

Source: Department of Education and Science

TABLE 7 Enrolments of students taking courses provided by Responsible Bodies, academic year 1978-79

	Number of courses	Registered students
Non-consecutive attendance		
2 years or more	733	12,507
20 or more meetings	3,972	67,871
10-19 meetings	4,533	72,388
9 meetings or less	3,409	59,320
Consecutive attendance		
3 days or more	1,019	20,194
2 days or less	1,470	47,874
Total	15,136	280,154

Source: Department of Education and Science

student body consists of undergraduates under 21 and post-graduates under 25, and a large proportion of 21 to 22 year old undergraduates can be regarded as pursuing their initial education because they are unlikely to have had any significant break in their full-time education since leaving school. Counted in this way, over two-thirds of university students are completing their

initial education. The proportion of students aged thirty or over in full-time undergraduate courses is very low. The number of students at universities in England and Wales in 1978 and their mode of study are given in Table 8.

*TABLE 8 Enrolments at universities, England and Wales 1978**

Full-time students			
Undergraduates	20 or under	126,539	
	21	34,395	
	22-24	27,180	
	25-29	7,401	
	30 or over	5,548	
			201,113
Postgraduates	24 or under	19,557	
	25-29	13,249	
	30 or over	11,430	
			44,236
Part-time students			
Undergraduates		3,100	
Postgraduates		21,461	
			24,561

**Excluding Open University*

Source: Universities Statistical Record

3.42 The Open University provides the main opportunity for adults to gain a degree by part-time study. Table 9 shows the rate at which the University developed between 1971 and 1978 and indicates that by 1978 the number of Open University first degree students probably equalled all the full-time first degree students aged 21 and over in all the other universities and polytechnics.

3.43 Universities are increasingly engaged in providing continuing education *outside* their degree programmes. In 1978 the universities offered over 16,000 courses to adults. About 20% of the students were qualified medical staff updating their knowledge through courses in university medical departments. But continuing education in the universities is not restricted to vocational education: only 4% of the courses in 1978 led to the award of certificates, diplomas or degrees. Table 10 gives a general indication of the size and length of courses offered. There were some 385,000 student enrolments in 1978, about 229,000 of

TABLE 9 Open University applications and admissions, 1971-1978

Year (1)	No. of applicants (2)	No. of new students registered (3)	Percentage of applicants registered (4)	Ongoing students (5)	Total students (6)	No. of graduates leaving the University	
						Ordinary (7)	Honours (8)
1971	43,444	19,581	45.1	—	19,581	—	—
1972	35,182	15,719	44.7	16,186	31,905	898	—
1973	32,046	12,680	39.6	25,744	38,424	3,640	14
1974	35,011	11,336	32.4	31,300	42,636	5,180	215
1975	52,537	14,830	28.2	34,528	49,358	5,469	443
1976	52,916	12,230	23.1	38,805	51,035	6,027	715
1977	49,956	14,971	30.0	40,156	55,127	5,990	889
1978	45,293	15,669	34.6	43,119	58,788	5,519	975
	346,385	117,016				32,723	3,251

Source: Open University *Digest of Statistics 1971-1978 Volume 1*

whom were taking courses provided through the universities' extra-mural departments, with the remainder provided through other university departments.

TABLE 10 Continuing education in the universities, 1978

Organisation	Number of courses	Average students per course	Average length of course in contact hours
Extra-mural	8,384	24	26
Extra-mural/WEA	2,395	17	34
PG medical depts.	2,551	22	51
Other university depts.	2,653	31	47
	15,983	24	35

Source: USR Continuing Education Record

OTHER PROVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

3.44 A broad brush has been used here to depict the scale of continuing education in industry and the public education sector. This has not done full justice to the scope of the activities which can be regarded as continuing education. There are, for example, many organisations in the national training system, other than the Manpower Services Commission and the Industrial Training Boards, providing education and training for adults: the Confederation of British Industry, the employers' associations, individual firms, the Trades Union Congress, individual trades unions, the armed services, and many professional bodies. Similarly there are many public authorities providing continuing education outside the public education sector: the sponsors of cultural and leisure activities such as the Arts Council and the Sports Council, the public library services, the Health Education Council, the Department of Health and Social Security and the local Social Service Departments, and the broadcasting media. There are also many independent further education institutions, not to mention private tutors, providing opportunities to study music, languages, crafts, dancing, sports, driving, office skills etc. There is the vast range of national and local voluntary organisations and community development associations with either a primary or secondary purpose in providing education for adults. There are large numbers of community arts centres and neighbourhood and community development projects with educational dimen-

sions, and innumerable local clubs and societies with the further education of their members among their aims.

3.45 It is impossible to make any accurate assessment of the scale of educational activities undertaken through this range of agencies. The main difficulty is to distinguish between directly educational and indirectly educative provision. In broadcasting, for example, audiences for continuing education series on television (with accompanying printed material) vary from over two million for popular courses to around fifty thousand for some language courses, and the sales of learning materials associated with these programmes vary from 200,000 for a cookery course to 10,000 for a course on basic maths. The picture is further complicated by the fact that many general output programmes, such as the *Life on Earth* and *Botanic Man* series, draw massive audiences and the associated books frequently become best-sellers. These books and series have a significant educative effect even though they were not originally produced as structured educational courses. Much the same applies to many of the activities in clubs and societies, in voluntary bodies and in community education, where any line drawn between what is or is not educational can be quite arbitrary; and since it is often impossible to draw any clear line, it becomes equally impossible to assess fully the scale of continuing education within the community. Much, in fact, depends on the chosen definition of education and even then watertight classification is rarely possible.

3.46 The only available estimates of the educational provision offered to adults by private educational institutions are given in a study of *Independent Further Education*[23], which divides private establishments into three groups. First, and the largest in student numbers, are the correspondence colleges: in 1975 there were an estimated 33 correspondence colleges with some 360,000 students. Second in student numbers are the institutions offering short courses in a variety of areas from languages and accountancy to lorry driving. Third are the small number of specialist institutions providing long formal courses of professional training. The secretarial colleges with an estimated 45,000 part-time and 4,000 full-time students fit somewhere between the second and third categories. The study estimates that there were well over 500 private establishments in 1975. Excluding correspondence students, they catered for over 100,000 students, with a fairly even balance between part-time and full-time students; about half these students were from overseas, and in certain subjects (notably languages and technical study) overseas students predominated. In total,

including correspondence students, the number of independent part-time students was equivalent to 12% of the part-time students in the public further education sector, and the full-time student numbers were equal to 18% of the public sector's full-time students.

3.47 Thus the *Independent Further Education* study suggests that about half a million people, presumably mostly adults, are engaged each year in some form of education outside industrial and public sector provision. The great majority are studying by correspondence. Although this mode of education is largely unexploited by industry and the public education sector, the *National Training Survey* indicates that correspondence courses were by far the most common method of study for those who were training for a different job to the one they were in at the time.

RECIPIENTS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

3.48 The basic question remains: how many adults engage in continuing education each year? Simply to identify all the national, regional and local bodies active in this field and to assemble a coherent set of statistics would be an immensely complex job. However, it might seem that the 'numbers' question could be reasonably answered by summing the number of participants in the principal sectors of education and training. Adding together the numbers released from industry to those in the public and independent further education sector, in the Responsible Bodies, and in some of the better known voluntary bodies, would give a figure approaching 20% of the adult population. This would still be misleading because of the large element of double counting; how many people engage in two or more educational activities at the same time? At least one third of those released from work (probably at least a million) attend outside educational establishments and they would be double counted by any sum of participation rates from both sources. Allowing for double counting, the numbers of adults engaged in some form of education or training in any one year is more likely to be about 16% of the adult population, giving a figure of about 6 million in England and Wales. This remains no more than an estimate, but it is broadly comparable with other estimates of the participation rate later in this chapter.

3.49 This review of the main providers of continuing education offers some indication of the distribution of opportunities among the participating population, as for example in the concentration of paid release from work on men, on the young and on certain occupations and in the concentration of universi-

TABLE 11 Students entering first degree courses, England and Wales 1978: university and CNAA degrees, full-time and sandwich courses and part-time courses

	Age on entry			Total	Total	Over 21 as percentage of all students
	Under 21	21-24	25+	entrants	over 21	%
University degrees*	64,305	9,505	7,816	81,626	17,321	21
CNAA degrees:						
Full-time and sandwich	21,041	5,432	3,893	30,366	9,325	31
Part-time	267	868	2,868	4,003	3,736	93
	85,613	15,805	14,577	115,995	30,382	26

**Excluding Open University*

Source: Universities Statistical Record and Department of Education and Science

TABLE 12 Age of students on all full-time and sandwich courses, England and Wales 1978

		Age 21-24		Age 25+	
	All students (1)	Number	Percentage of (1) %	Number	Percentage of (1) %
Advanced					
Full-time	146,018	48,255	33	36,458	25
Sandwich	48,016	19,361	40	6,835	14
Non-advanced					
Full-time	296,723	22,604	8	31,346	11
Sandwich	7,983	1,112	14	564	7

Source: Department of Education and Science

ty resources on full-time first degree students under the age of twenty-one.

3.50 The limited extent of adult student representation in higher education both in universities and polytechnics is revealed in data on the age of student entry. The most striking feature in Table 11 is the very high proportion (and the small absolute number) of adults among those in part-time courses. The expansion of full-time higher education in the 1960s has coincided with a reduction in part-time degree study. The trend is clearest in the universities (excluding the Open University) where there was a decline in undergraduate part-time enrolments from 4,506 in 1965/66 (3.2% of all undergraduates) to 3,769 (1.6%) in 1978/79.

3.51 The proportion of adults enrolling in advanced and non-advanced further education courses, shown in Table 12, indicates the heavy preponderance of younger students on full-time non-advanced courses. However, the extent to which the further education sector *can* offer adults the opportunity to re-enter education is clearer when the ages of entrants to first-stage qualifications are considered: Table 13 shows that in 1978 entrants in the 25 and over age group were more numerous than the 21 to 24 group. Some of the former were on post-experience courses in management, accountancy and business studies or in technological subjects but an appreciable number were entering degree courses.

3.52 There is a considerable imbalance between the sexes among mature entrants to universities. Table 14 shows the number of adult entrants to each main subject area in 1978. Men greatly outnumbered women in science and engineering; the proportions were much more even in the arts and women outnumbered men in studying English and languages. There is a relatively high proportion of women returning to education over the age of thirty. Their choice of subjects suggests their lack of specialisation at school and perhaps the absence of any clear vocational orientation on their return. This is also found among mature students in the polytechnics where men outnumbered women by two to one, and a high proportion of the men were on vocational and professional in-service courses.

3.53 Not surprisingly there is a somewhat different age and sex pattern among Open University students, since the OU is designed for the education of adults rather than school leavers, and normally does not accept students under the age of twenty-one. About two thirds of the students are over 30 and,

TABLE 13 Age of students on first year of course, full-time or sandwich, England and Wales 1978

	All students categorised (1)	Age 21-24 Percentage of (1)		Age 25+ Percentage of (1)	
		Number	%	Number	%
Advanced					
Full-time	58,773	12,496	21	15,834	27
Sandwich	18,010	4,020	22	2,299	13
Non-advanced					
Full-time	230,206	16,045	7	27,542	12
Sandwich	4,955	373	8	380	8

Source: Department of Education and Science

TABLE 14 Mature entrants to universities, subjects of study, England and Wales 1978

		Age groups		
		21-24	25-29	30+
Engineering	Men	1,630	271	102
	Women	78	8	2
Science and maths	Men	1,036	231	119
	Women	375	87	50
Social studies	Men	986	439	442
	Women	509	310	381
English/languages	Men	279	127	105
	Women	413	129	189
History/art	Men	350	202	139
	Women	278	93	142
All subjects*	Men	5,354	1,533	1,182
	Women	2,361 (31%)	800 (35%)	1,039 (47%)

**Including other subjects not listed separately*

Source: Universities Statistical Record

while there are more women than in conventional full-time higher education, men are still in an overall majority, with the exception of those under 30 where women marginally predominate. The subject distribution shows similar differences between the sexes as in Table 14.

3.54 While it is not possible to give any detailed analysis by sex and age for further education, Table 2 has already shown the number of enrolments by sex in further education establishments in 1977 to 1979, and Table 15 shows the proportion of men to women entrants aged 25 and over. In that age group women are more heavily represented on the non-advanced full-time courses than on the advanced, and men outnumber them on sandwich courses.

TABLE 15 Men and women entrants, aged 25 and over, to first year of course, advanced and non-advanced, full-time and sandwich, England and Wales 1978

	Total	Men	Women
Advanced full-time	20,186	11,824	8,362 (41%)
Sandwich	2,348	2,031	317 (13%)
Non-advanced full-time	27,542	12,495	15,047 (55%)
Sandwich	380	231	149 (40%)

Source: Department of Education and Science

3.55 It is also not possible to analyse the social class distribution of adults in higher and further education. The categorisation generally used for the young, that of the occupation of the father during the later years of schooling, is not available, let alone relevant for the majority of adults. Such evidence as there is, shows that many adult students have displayed a high degree of upward social mobility, and are therefore measured as middle class as adults, although many of them started their lives as working class.

3.56 The one sector of continuing education where the general patterns found elsewhere do not apply is non-vocational adult education, provided mainly in the evenings in adult education centres. In 1978 the adult student enrolment in these centres was just over 2 million of whom 1,384,000 (69%) were women. This plainly indicates that women find their main opportunities for continuing their education in courses which are not vocationally oriented, which are not at an advanced level, and which rarely lead to qualifications. A detailed study of participation in non-vocational adult education in 1968 also revealed a bias towards the young, the more educated, and the higher social classes.[24] Table 16 shows the patterns of participation in comparison with the distribution of the population in 1968. These statistics from the National Institute of Adult Education's *Adequacy of Provision* survey showed that in 1968 women students outnumbered men three to one, and even more heavily in LEA classes than in courses run by the Responsible Bodies where the ratio was two to one. The survey also showed that the elderly were disproportionately under-represented, particularly in LEA classes, those with more years of schooling were very clearly heavily over-represented, and that those in social classes A, B and C_1 outnumbered the others by three to one in LEA classes and by four to one in Responsible Body classes.

TABLE 16 Non-vocational adult education, comparison of a sample of the student body with the adult population by sex, age, school leaving age and social class, 1968

	Population sample	Student sample		
	Total n=3549	Total 1369	In LEA classes 1139	In RB classes 230
	%	%	%	%
Sex: Male	48	25	23	34
Female	52	75	77	66
Age: 18-34	27	44	48	26
35-54	39	38	37	45
55+	35	17	15	29
School leaving age:				
15 or less	74	39	43	27
16	11	20	21	15
17 or over	14	41	36	58
Social Class:				
$A/B/C_1$	36	76	75	82
$C_2/D/E$	65	22	23	15

Source: NIAE, *Adequacy of Provision* (1970)

3.57 The value of these figures is that they show something of the traditional student population in the adult education sector. Since 1968 there has been some shift towards levelling the balance between the sexes. There is also some evidence that in the early 1970s more people were being drawn into adult education from the lower social classes. But with the frequent and steep fee increases in the second half of the seventies, enrolments from this section of the population have fallen and the social composition of the student body is now probably still broadly similar to what it was over a decade ago. The major exception, which emerged in the 1970s, is adult literacy tuition. This has drawn into education, usually for the first time since school, over 100,000 adults, the majority of whom are men and who come from the full range of social classes. In comparison with the numbers attending other forms of non-vocational adult education, and also in comparison with the two million adults in Britain estimated to be functionally illiterate, this represents a small but significant change.

3.58 The question still to be answered is: what proportion of the adult population has continued its education in some way after

completing the initial period of education? The examination above of the main sectors of provision has shown the pattern of participation, but this does not fully answer the question. Probably the best and certainly the latest information on which to base an answer is the Council's national survey.[25] The results of that survey showed that in 1980 10% of the adult population in England and Wales were at that time engaged in some form of continuing education or training. A further 10% of those interviewed said that they had undertaken some form of continuing education or training in the preceding three years, and a further 27% replied that they had done so at some other time. Thus a total of 47% of the adult population had at some stage continued their education since leaving initial education. The survey also revealed that 2% of the population in England and Wales above the minimum school leaving age were, at the time of the survey, in full-time education, but these were almost entirely young people between the ages of 17 and 21 finishing their initial education in schools, colleges of further education, polytechnics and universities on courses leading to academic or vocational qualifications. The remaining 51% of the adult population were shown to have never engaged in any kind of education or training since completing their initial education.

3.59 The survey also revealed that most of that 51% of the adult population of England and Wales, who had never undertaken any sort of continuing education, had finished their initial education at the minimum school leaving age. Figures cited earlier (see Figure 2) indicated that nearly 40% of the population left school at the minimum age *and* have had no form of education or training since then. The great majority of those who have had no continuing education or training are therefore those with the least initial education. Conversely, the main beneficiaries of continuing education are those who have had the longest initial education.

*TABLE 17 Current participants in continuing education by age group, social class and sex 1980**

Age	Men	Women	Class	Men	Women
	%	%		%	%
17-24	21	22	AB	10	23
25-44	14	13	C_1	18	21
45-64	5	10	C_2	7	11
65-75	4	9	D/E	6	5
All	11	13		11	13

**Including 2% currently in full-time initial education*

Source: ACACE, *Adults: their educational experience and needs (1982)*

3.60 The analysis in Table 17 shows that the rate of participation falls with age, particularly for men. Even the equal proportions of men and women in the under 45 age groups are deceptive since the evidence cited previously indicates that men are more commonly found on full-time or sandwich courses, in vocationally related courses and in courses leading to qualifications, while women are more often found in part-time, non-advanced courses which are not vocationally related and carry no qualifications. By the age of 45 the educational opportunities taken by men have fallen greatly, particularly those on release from work, and the participation of women over 45 reflects their more than two to one predominance over men in non-vocational adult education. The pattern of men pursuing more work-related courses and women more general courses is consistent with the difference in participation by social class also shown in Table 17.

EXPENDITURE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION

3.61 No accurate estimate of the total expenditure on continuing education is available. At best all that can be offered is the roughest of estimates. There is an obvious reason for this. The concept of continuing education spans an extraordinarily broad and fragmented range of activities with only one common thread — the education and training of the adult population after the completion of initial education. There are difficulties in compiling statistics even in specific areas where at first sight it might be thought relatively easy to do so. Perhaps the best example is the problem encountered earlier in this chapter of estimating the amount of paid educational release from work, because of the lack of compatible statistics among the different industries. Similar difficulties occur in discovering how much is spent on industrial training. Since the ending of the Industrial Training Boards' levy/grant system, it has become extremely difficult to measure the volume of, and the expenditure on, training.

3.62 Britain is not alone in being unable to state how much is spent on the education of the adult population. A report on adult education statistics prepared for the Council of Europe concluded that: *"....everywhere an obstacle is encountered in the sheer lack of reliable statistical information about the education of adults. By comparison, the planning of other sectors of education is statistically well informed."*[26] Similarly the OECD observed in *Learning Opportunities for Adults* that: *"....one reason for the equivocal position of adult education is that the public authorities are poorly informed about its real nature and scope and do not have data, whether statistical or not, neces-*

sary for the formulation of practical policies for expansion."[427] The only authoritative report on the scale and costs of adult and continuing education in Britain was undertaken as part of this OECD study by Maureen Woodhall. She estimated that in 1970 at least 5 million and probably between 6 and 8 million adults received some form of part-time education or training. Her estimate of expenditure, the result of a series of rough guesses, is reproduced in Table 18.

TABLE 18 Estimated costs of the education and training of adults in the United Kingdom, 1970

	(£ million)
Industrial training (not including professions)	500
Professional training	200
In-service training in the Civil Service	34
Vocational training scheme	25
Other Government expenditure on training	5
Part-time further education	80
Open University	8
Private establishments, including correspondence	120
Armed services	230
	£1,202

Source: OECD, *Learning Opportunities for Adults, Vol. IV: Participation in Adult Education, (1977)*

This total of £1,200 million compares with an estimate of £2,500 million for initial education, or £2,280 million if the costs of part-time education are subtracted. Thus the relative cost of the education and training of adults reflects the estimated number of adults continuing their education, which is about half the number of children and young people in full-time education.

3.63 But Woodhall pointed out that this crude comparison of numbers and costs is somewhat misleading since roughly half the total number of adults participating in education or training were taking non-vocational courses, yet expenditure on non-vocational adult education represented less than 1% of the total educational expenditure. Thus the disparity between the resources allocated to the vocational and to the non-vocational sectors was enormous. Adults taking non-vocational courses equalled more than 20% of the total numbers of those in full-time education, but received less than 1% of the total educational resources. On the other hand adults taking vocational courses, also equivalent to over 20% of the numbers

engaged in full-time education, accounted for about half as much expenditure as the total for full-time formal education.

3.64 To obtain more up-to-date estimates of the scope and costs of adult and continuing education the Council commissioned the same author to up-date the study in 1980.[28] These subsequent enquiries led her to conclude that it was no easier in 1980 than in 1970 to make an assessment either of participation or of costs. It proved impracticable to up-date at all accurately the 1970 estimates, but it was possible to identify certain areas where there had been changes. The most striking development during the 1970s was the increasing involvement of central government in manpower training. Most notable, from the point of view of provision for continuing education, was the development of the Training Opportunities Scheme. From training 29,000 people in 1972 at a cost of about £30 million, the scheme had grown by 1977 to the training of 94,000 people at a cost of £197 million. There had also been the marked growth in the number of Open University students, from about 20,000 registered students in 1971 to 60,000 in 1978. The number of part-time enrolments in further education colleges and in adult education centres increased from 2.9 million in 1970 to 3.5 million in 1978, and between 1969 and 1976-77 there had been an increase in the number of adults attending courses run by the Responsible Bodies from 250,000 to 280,000.

3.65 As for changes in expenditure, the few estimates available suggest that the resources allocated to the education and training of adults have remained fairly constant in relative terms. The 1970 estimate of £1,200 million equalled half the total expenditure on full-time education in that year and thus a third of the total expenditure on all forms of education and training. The estimated cost for all forms of vocational education and training was comparable to slightly under 3% of total wages and salaries and to 30% of expenditure on formal education. In 1979 the MSC's Director of Training suggested £3,000 million[29] as a rough estimate of the expenditure on vocational training (this figure included all forms of vocational training in industry as well as the MSC's training expenditure). Since the total cost of education in Great Britain in 1979/80 was over £9,000 million, vocational training was again roughly equal to one third of total expenditure on formal education, and to about 3% of total wages and salaries. Given that all these figures are very approximate and offer no more than orders of magnitude, they suggest that the 1970s have seen very little real growth in the resources devoted to the education and training of adults.

3.66 Building on Woodhall's report, it is possible to make a very rough estimate of total expenditure on both initial and continuing education. The main sources for this are expenditure by public education authorities, adult participation in further and higher education, and the estimate just quoted of the expenditure on all forms of vocational training and retraining. Just over 30% of the combined education budgets of central and local government is devoted to education outside the school sector. The universities account for approximately 3% of total expenditure; a further 3% or slightly more is expended on financial support to students; and further education accounts for about 6.5%. Under the further education heading about 1.5% of total expenditure goes to polytechnics and about 0.3% to adult education. Using what is known of the pattern of initial and continuing education in further education and the universities, the following results are obtained for educational expenditure on adults.

TABLE 19 Percentage of all public sector education expenditure spent on those outside the school system

	% of all expenditure
Full-time Education	
Universities	3
Advanced further education	2
Non-advanced further education	1.5
Student awards	3
Part-time Education	
All further education	3
Open University and University continuing education	1.5
Adult education (including Responsible Bodies and residential centres)	1
	15%

3.67 The figures in Table 19 are very rough estimates, but as an approximation they suggest that about 15% of all educational expenditure by central and local government is on those continuing their education beyond the initial education stage. If anything, this is likely to be an over-estimate. This expenditure covers at least two and three-quarter million adults: those in adult education centres over eighteen, those studying with the Responsible Bodies and in adult residential centres, those in continuing education courses provided by the universities, those over twenty-one in further and in higher education, and

university postgraduates over twenty-four. Only about 250,000 of all these students are in full-time education, but these each have about seventeen times as much spent on them as the part-time adult students. This is a reminder that full-time education, especially higher education, is very expensive. In 1978 there were some 10 million children and young people undergoing their initial education in schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities. About 85% of public expenditure on education was allocated to them. The remaining 15% was devoted to the whole of the adult population, and at most 1% was allocated to the nearly two million adults attending adult education centres.

3.68 To complete the picture of total expenditure the costs of industrial training and retraining have to be added. The amount devoted by industry to education and training is not well established, although the level of governmental expenditure is known. Using 6% of Gross National Product as a round figure for governmental education expenditure, and the MSC's estimate for expenditure on industrial training in 1979 (see paragraph 3.65 above), total expenditure on education and training by government and industry amounts to 8% of the GNP. This estimate of industry's contribution may be too low, but it cannot be a gross under-estimate if Woodhall's estimates for both 1970 and 1980 are accepted. She estimated that the cost of industrial training was equivalent to about 3% of wages and salaries, perhaps a little lower. Of course, if industry's contribution were greater then the balance between initial and continuing education would shift. But even if it amounted to half the public sector figure, this would still leave the total expenditure on all education and training as equivalent to 9% of GNP with continuing education still accounting for considerably less than half of that. No account has been taken in these calculations of the expenditure by the many other public, private and voluntary bodies engaged directly or indirectly in continuing education, because at present it is impossible to present any idea of the sums of money involved in providing for adults to educate themselves outside industry and the public education sector. Any assessment of this expenditure will vary according to the definition of education chosen.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

3.69 At present two thirds of the school population leave at the minimum age, but one in five of these goes into part-time vocational education. The remainder stay on in full-time education for up to two years, one in three of these goes further with little or no break into full-time higher education. The Council's

national survey showed that almost 40% of the adult population both left school at the minimum age *and* have had no form of education or training since then; and that in 1980 10% of the adult population were in continuing education at that time, 20% had had some form of continuing education in the past three years, and 51% had never taken part in any form of education or training since completing their initial education.

3.70 All the indicators show that those with the longest initial education, those who are in the higher social classes, the young, men and those seeking vocational education are consistently better able to take advantage of the existing opportunities for continuing education. Those with the minimum initial education, manual workers and the elderly are consistently under represented. The main opportunities for women lie in non-vocational education. There are also regional imbalances, probably because the most prosperous regions contain a larger proportion of the most educated.

3.71 A broad estimate of the expenditure indicates that 8 to 9% of the Gross National Product is devoted to all forms of education and training, and well over half of this goes to initial education. Eighty-five per cent of the expenditure by public authorities on education goes to initial education. Their expenditure on the education of the adult population is estimated at about 1% of the GNP.

3.72 The general conclusion which may be drawn from this chapter is that although the provision of continuing education is widespread, it is also haphazard. The conclusion of the authors of the recent study of paid eductional leave[30] merits attention:

> *"What should principally be remarked about the organisation of paid educational leave, with the notable exception of trade union education, is that it is not organised as paid educational leave at all. The organisation of paid educational leave and, hence, its distribution amongst the population is a reflex of the structure of occupations and of training decisions made by the employer, in a setting of agreements, customary practices and regulations which chiefly relate to the first training for work of those whose school achievements are already above, rather than below average."*

A similar conclusion may be drawn for continuing education generally. No coherent policy is discernible. The arguments put forward in the following chapter seek to show that the *laissez-faire* principle, which has traditionally been applied in providing opportunities for adults to continue their education, is no longer

acceptable. For pressing economic and social reasons it is becoming more and more necessary to formulate and implement a coherent national policy for the education of adults.

Chapter Four
BARRIERS TO ACCESS

INTRODUCTION

4.1 Many people argue that our existing institutions are already making adequate provision for all the educational needs of adults, and that there is little evidence of an unsatisfied demand for education and training among adults. Certainly Britain is fortunate in already having a rich and diverse range of provision, as was shown in chapter 3. However, there is increasing evidence that many adults are barred from access to current provision for a wide variety of reasons.[31] It is necessary to start from the position that existing structures can and should be built on by making them more accessible. Some improvements will not cost significantly more, but they will require a change in attitude and commitment on behalf of the institution. For every barrier to access identified here, there is at least one organisation which has already overcome it and shown the way forward to others. It is the widest possible extension of the current best practice which is urgently needed.

4.2 The barriers discussed in this chapter do not of course affect all adults at every stage of their lives. A recent comprehensive analysis by Cross[32] of American experience classifies three main barriers.

- ***Dispositional:*** *related to attitudes and self-perception as an adult learner, for example, adults with a poor educational background frequently feel they have no ability or interest in learning, and the elderly feel they are too old.*
- ***Institutional:*** *practices and procedures which discourage working adults from taking part in education, for example, inconvenient schedules or locations, high fee levels, and the lack of appropriate provision.*
- ***Situational:*** *arising from the adult's situation in life at a given time, for example, lack of time due to job responsibilities, lack of money especially when young, and lack of child care arrangements for parents.*

4.3 The research both in the United States and in this country shows that these barriers affect large numbers of people. In both countries the most frequently stated reasons are lack of time and money. However, these are more socially acceptable reasons than some others and it is therefore not surprising, as Cross notes, that they rank in research findings as the leading barriers and are far more common than the more personally

demeaning barriers such as lack of confidence, lack of ability and lack of interest. Those who have already defined themselves as 'wantless' in educational terms are the least able, and find it most difficult, to consider and discuss what they want.

4.4 Much of the discussion will inevitably concentrate on the barriers to access to full and part-time courses aimed at qualifications in further and higher education. But most adults do not want to continue their education in this way. The majority require a wide range of educational activities which can be undertaken in their spare time, and which are most often not aimed at qualifications or career improvement. This is not to say that adults do not seek qualifications and vocational courses in their spare time: it simply emphasizes the need for a wide range of educational activities for large numbers of adults. At present up to three million adults take part in some form of spare-time education in any one year, a figure which suggests that a wide ranging education service is the essential foundation for continuing education. Yet it is this sector of education which is now in decline, and expenditure forecasts assume increased fee contributions from students and a much reduced total budget. To cut back on the bedrock of adult education provision at this stage is short-sighted. This is the educational base from which the country needs to expand to meet new needs. To reduce the base is likely to prove a false economy.

ENTRY INTO ANY FORM OF EDUCATION

4.5 Before looking in detail at the barriers facing particular groups of adults there is one major problem which confronts people of all ages, and which is a *fundamental* barrier to participation in education of any sort. Many adults are totally unprepared to enter much of our current education and training provision. The Council's report on basic education[33] estimates that at least three million adults in Britain lack the fundamental skills necessary to enable them to function actively in a democratic society. Their poorly developed communication skills deny them the information, expertise and educational opportunities which are available to other adults. Unless they are given the opportunity to develop these fundamental skills, they will be unable even to make a start on continuing their education. In describing the wide range of provision needed for basic education and the types of people whose needs must be met, the Council's report draws two main conclusions: that the provision must be designed to meet the needs perceived by individual adults through their own experience, and that the aim must be to enable people to learn how to continue to learn. There is unlikely to be any quick resolution of this problem,

particularly since many children (few in proportion to the total, but large in absolute numbers) will continue to leave secondary schools less than functionally and socially literate. The establishment of a wide ranging adult basic education programme must be one of the foundations of a comprehensive service of continuing education. Much will depend here on a broadened remit and increased funding for the national initiatives promoted by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit.

PRIORITY GROUPS

4.6 Since resources are always limited and there are always competing demands for them, decisions have to be made about priorities. There are a number of groups whose educational needs could be given priority in new provision. Some of these groups are large numerically, while other smaller groups have more specific problems. The Trades Union Congress[34] recently stressed the importance of increased opportunities for women and for ethnic minorities and, in particular, the needs of the majority of the population who leave school at the minimum school leaving age. In the Council's view there are at least four sections of the population whose educational needs deserve priority for continuing education, not least because members of these groups are at present under-represented in their take-up of educational opportunities: manual workers, women, ethnic minorities, and the physically and mentally handicapped.

4.7 The low rate of manual workers' participation in education has already been mentioned in chapter 3. The proportion of manual workers' children entering higher education is far lower than the proportion from other social classes, and it is declining. This holds true even when children from different social classes are matched for intelligence. In adult education also, there is comparatively low participation by manual workers and their families. The majority of students are drawn disproportionately from other social classes. It may be that our present education system does not offer enough educational opportunities of the type that manual workers regard as appropriate to their needs; and there is little doubt that since the majority of people left school at the minimum age with few or no qualifications, their ability, and probably inclination, to take up further educational opportunities is low. One test of a successful system of continuing education is its capacity to appreciate the different needs of different groups and therefore to attract manual workers and their families by provision which they themselves perceive as relevant to their own needs.

4.8 Women are also under-represented in many sectors of educa-

tion. While they outnumber men by more than two to one in part-time non-vocational adult education, this situation is reversed in much of further and higher education. At the lower levels, far fewer girls go on to any form of training. At the higher levels, although there has been an increase in the proportion of women over the past twenty years, there are still more men than women studying for degrees and the imbalance is very evident in scientific and technical subjects. The reasons for this are social and cultural as much as educational, but the Equal Opportunities Commission recently expressed the view that our present methods of *providing* education do discriminate against women. The types of education they choose to enter are often those for which discretionary rather than mandatory grants are available, or for which there are no grants at all, and much provision assumes the possibility of full-time attendance. These factors effectively debar many women. Yet there is a strong case for making the continuing education of women a priority. After a period devoted primarily to their family and children, many seek to re-enter employment or engage in wider social activity and, unless opportunities for education during or after the period of child-rearing are widely available, most will find themselves at a disadvantage in competing for jobs and in reaching their full potential as individuals and citizens.

4.9 Adult members of ethnic minority groups also have educational needs that are not at present being adequately recognised or met.[35] Many have basic educational needs different from those in the indigenous population, and both they and their children have the doubly difficult task of preserving their cultural identity while accommodating to the norms of the dominant culture. The European Economic Commission's directive for increased provision for the teaching of mother tongue languages in schools may well increase involvement and raised expectations among the children's parents. If for no other reason than social harmony, priority should be given to identifying the adult educational needs of ethnic minorities and to responding with wider and more specific provision for continuing their education.

4.10 The fourth category is of a different order, which does not allow for easy categorisation or provision. The physically and mentally disabled are a heterogeneous group, scattered throughout the population, with widely differing needs. They are very likely to enter adult life already educationally disadvantaged, and many continue to find that opportunities for study through conventional institutions are closed to them. There are some institutions providing creatively for the education of disabled

adults, but the numbers enrolled are small and there are thousands of others in need of a wider range of opportunities, preferably through ordinary colleges and in contact with other students. The move to provide more integrated opportunities for disabled children at school level needs to be matched with efforts to open the whole range of post-school education and training to the disabled.

4.11 The singling out of these priority groups asserts the principle that a major aim of continuing education is to compensate those whose previous educational opportunities have been restricted. Continuing education is not simply compensatory, but the compensation of educational inequalities must be one of its elements. Without such priorities there is a real danger that increasing the opportunities for continuing education will only accentuate the inequalities in educational benefit. It is all too easy to respond to the educational 'haves', well able to identify their needs and articulate their demands, and to leave at the end of the queue the educational 'have-nots', whose needs are generally far more difficult to identify and meet. This danger must be avoided if continuing education is to be open to all in practice as well as in principle.

4.12 The four groups listed comprise most of those in our society who face the barriers to access which are considered below. This list is not of course exhaustive and others may have more compelling candidates for whom they would argue, for example, people as parents, as consumers, as voters, as trade unionists, and as redundant and unemployed workers.

4.13 One other group of people clearly meriting attention is the elderly, both before and after retirement. The population of this country is ageing. Already 17.5% of the population is over retirement age. By 1991 nearly 4 million people will be over seventy-five and there will be an increasing number of dependent elderly needing care from their families and the community. There will also be an increasing number of active retired people who will have time to be used creatively both for themselves and for the community. While it can be argued that education for the elderly produces no individual or national economic benefit, there can be no question that for the elderly to be active, healthy, and self-sufficient is a substantial social benefit which has undoubted economic advantages. Education for maintaining good health is an example of educational intervention which can reduce the need for other more costly social intervention.

FIGURE 6. TYPES OF BARRIERS AFFECTING MOST TYPES OF POTENTIAL LEARNERS

Groups of Potential Students

Barriers to access	Manual Workers	Married Women Returners	Ethnic Minorities	Disabled	Elderly	Young Unemployed	Parents of Young Children
Dispositional							
Attitudinal	x	x	x		x	x	
Informational	x		x	x		x	x
Institutional							
Geographical		x		x	x		x
Financial	x	x			x	x	x
Structural	x			x			
Situational							
Lack of child car facilities		x					x
Lack of time off form work for study	x						x
Educational							
Lack of Qualifications	x		x			x	
Lack of educational preparedness	x	x	x		x		

BARRIERS AFFECTING DIFFERENT TYPES OF STUDENTS

4.14 In listing the main barriers to access to continuing education, it may be helpful to look first at which groups of potential students are most likely to be affected by which barriers. Figure 6 is not exhaustive and there will be different views about the relative incidence and importance of the different barriers, but it does suggest something of the significance of each of the barriers.

4.15 The research commissioned by the Council on adults' educational experience and needs,[36] confirms that these barriers have been and continue to be significant, although some are more important for some types of people and for some types of study, as Table 20 demonstrates. All the respondents were asked *"If you were starting life after school all over again, is there anything you would do differently? For example, were there times when you wished you had chosen a further course of study but didn't?"* Nearly half (46%) of both men and women answered that they would have liked to have taken further study, and they were then asked whether they would have chosen full or part-time study, and why did they not take up that study. Finance emerges as the most important stated barrier, especially for full-time study. Lack of knowledge of opportunities and lack of appropriate qualifications also appear high on the list. Women are particularly affected by family responsibilities, and there is evidence that some have been prevented by family attitudes from studying full-time. The rest of this chapter considers these barriers in more detail.

ATTITUDES TO EDUCATION

4.16 The major unstated barrier to access is probably the attitude which assumes that education is only for the young as a preparation for adult life. This traditional attitude, which is becoming increasingly irrelevant to the educational needs of our society, is deeply entrenched among adults whose initial education has been minimal and who have never undertaken any form of continuing education. The additional difficulty is that the education system has systematically and effectively labelled some people as successful learners and others as failures. Those who have accepted that they are failures are less likely, unless something else intervenes to change their attitudes, to seek to re-enter the scene of that former failure. Others have been put off by their previous experience of school and do not want to re-enter study under what they often perceive as rigid institutional arrangements.

4.17 It will not be easy to change these attitudes. Broadcasting, judging by its critical part in the adult literacy campaign, can

TABLE 20 Reasons why adults had not been able to study in the past*

	Type of Study					
	Part-time			Full-time		
Base: all wishing they had followed a course=100%	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women
Reasons	%	%	%	%	%	%
Could not afford it	26	29	24	32	34	29
Did not know about suitable courses	19	20	19	17	15	18
Did not have entry qualifications	15	14	16	16	17	15
Had to look after children and other dependents	14	4	22	8	5	11
No suitable course in the area	12	13	11	8	8	9
Could not get time off	11	13	9	5	6	3
Too much travelling involved	8	9	8	6	4	8
Study would not have given finanical benefit	8	7	9	7	6	8
Family objected	5	2	8	11	7	15
Unable to get enough finance/grant	3	5	2	6	7	5

**Main reasons only listed*

Source: ACACE, *Adults: their educational experience and needs* (1982)

significantly influence attitudes. Through both its educational and general output it can carry the message of increasing educational opportunities for adults to continue their education. Nevertheless, attitudes are responses to reality and they will not change in a vacuum. Attitudinal change goes hand in hand with structural change and without changes in the educational system there can be little hope of transforming attitudes towards education.

4.18 Some might argue that it does not matter if the majority of the adult population remains uninterested in education, and that it is arrogant for well educated people to assume that others

should be obliged to share their educational advantages. The alternative view is that education is of such fundamental importance that adults should have a right to continued access to it, as children do. It is certainly not good enough to accept the view that the supply of education must wait for the demand to appear. Unless demand is stimulated by first creating the educational opportunities, there will be little apparent demand and little real change.

4.19 The Council's survey did indeed provide substantial evidence of unmet demand in the past, and points clearly to areas of future demand. Questions were asked to discover both what people would have liked to have studied when they were young, and what they would like to study now or in the future. Table 21 shows the proportion of men and women making, or wishing they had been able to make different educational demands.

TABLE 21 Demand for study both in the past and present

All respondents=100%	All	Men	Women
	%	%	%
Would take a course if starting adult life again	46	46	46
Would like to have followed a course when young	49	50	47
Would have liked to have taken a course when considering changing type of work	15	19	9
Would now like to learn about subjects or interests never previously studied	61	60	63
Would now like to follow a work-related course	15	20	9
Would now like a course for interest rather than job	61	62	59
Would like a course after retirement*	10	11	10

**45-64 year olds only*

Source: ACACE, *Adults: their educational experience and needs* (1982)

This evidence is important and does much to substantiate the contention that there is a large pool of latent demand, which needs to be stimulated to transform it into actual demand.

INFORMATION ON AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES

4.20 The first difficulty that many adults encounter in seeking to return to study is finding out what form of education is most suitable to their needs and where and how it is available. This may be relatively easy for those with some continuing experience of education, but it is much more difficult for those without that experience. Even professional educators can have problems in helping potential students to track down information and to distinguish among the host of institutions and agencies covering the many different aspects of provision.

4.21 Helpful information about educational opportunities is often provided, but not always in relevant or appropriate ways. Much could be achieved by a more imaginative and professional use of publicity, but while better publicity would undoubtedly help many people, it is unlikely to be enough by itself. What are urgently required, and the replies to the Council's discussion paper *Towards Continuing Education* are virtually unanimous in this, are local educational guidance services (providing information, advice and counselling) to act as a bridge between potential adult students and the institutions and agencies which may be able to help their re-entry to education. The Council's report on *Links to Learning*[37] describes in detail this need and the range of services at present available as well as proposing future developments. The next chapter deals specifically with this area.

GEOGRAPHICAL BARRIERS

4.22 The institutional barriers can be divided into geographical, financial and structural barriers. Geography is assuming increasing importance as a barrier because more students are studying part-time, public transport facilities are deteriorating, particularly in country areas, and increasing fuel costs are making private transport much more expensive. While it may be realistic to expect to travel quite long distances for full-time specialist or high level study, part-time study opportunities if they are to be generally accessible must be widespread and near to people's ordinary lives as workers, or as parents or as citizens. This argues for a large network of small centres feeding into a smaller network of large centres. This proposal is discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

4.23 Another version of this physical barrier is the kind of buildings in which education is provided. It is apparently sensible for adults to use educational accommodation designed and built for children, but this adult use is invariably regarded as of secondary importance rather than as a sharing on an equal footing.[38]

School furniture, desks and chairs are generally not suited to adults and there is rarely anywhere comfortable to sit and talk or drink coffee. Very few school buildings or adult centres have been designed or adapted to allow for adequate access by the physically disabled.

4.24 There is of course no reason why the location of educational opportunities should be confined to educational premises. Learning can take place at home, in clubs, community centres, public libraries and elsewhere. The least used location is perhaps the workplace, which could be much more effectively exploited for part-time education, not just as education for work, but simply providing accommodation for general education during or immediately after work.

FINANCIAL BARRIERS

4.25 Many adults have been and continue to be debarred from taking up educational opportunities for financial reasons. There are grants and other forms of financial support for some full-time courses, and it is certainly true that those fortunate enough to get mandatory grants are frequently better off than equivalent students in many other countries. However, many mature students fall through the net of the mandatory grants system. It is not clear why students studying the same course *part-time* should not be eligible for the same basic grant to cover tuition and study costs, especially since they are saving the country money by studying part-time. The direct costs of study — tuition fees, books and equipment — are only part of the problem. Adults frequently face more serious indirect expenditure in wages or overtime payments foregone and additional domestic costs in, for example, minding children. While part-time education does not cost as much in terms of foregone pay, it can be quite expensive for such items as additional travel. A more subtle problem arises where people do not know the real cost of study, or whether financial support is available, but believe that by definition it must be too expensive for them. More information and advice is needed to overcome this.

4.26 Enrolment figures in the adult education sector have fallen substantially in the past two or three years at the same time as fees have increased steeply, well above the level of inflation.[39] This can only point to what economists would describe as the inelasticity of demand in response to increased charges, which could equally be called a financial barrier to education. This has been made worse by the almost total collapse of the system of inter-authority subsidy agreements for adults to enrol in adult education provision outside their own authority's area at an

ordinary fee level rather than at the very much higher unsubsidised cost. This has turned many local education authorities into adult education 'islands' beyond whose boundary of provision most adults cannot afford to venture, a very clear financial and geographical barrier.[40]

4.27 At present financial help for students is unsystematic and unequal in its provision. As the move towards self-financing courses grows, and fuel costs increase, finance is likely to become an increasing barrier even for locally available part-time courses. Chapter 10 considers ways in which support could be improved both in the medium and long term, so that many more adults need not be debarred from the education they need and want.

STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

4.28 There are a variety of structural barriers in the education system. The first requirement in lowering them is to make available *academic* provision appropriate in content and level and subject choice. In some sectors of education there is already a well articulated demand and a wide range of provision, with planning arrangements to respond to fluctuations in both the level and the nature of the demand. In other sectors that demand is unlikely to emerge in a clearly articulated way unless adults are made more aware of the potentially available supply.

4.29 It has already been argued (paragraphs 2.18 and 2.19) that there is a sizeable *latent* demand for education among the adult population: the Open University and adult literacy work have both demonstrated in the last few years that large numbers of adults are willing to re-enter education when suitable provision is made and widely publicised. Between these levels of undergraduate and basic education there must be a sizeable and diverse additional demand for education, although its scale and nature are difficult to estimate. It may be less difficult to determine the nature and level of demand among adults for existing qualification bearing and vocationally related education. Here it is mainly a matter of removing such practical barriers to access as, for example, the lack of financial support or the absence of the normal entrance requirements. It is in the sphere of adult general (non-qualification bearing) education where it is much more difficult to judge the level and nature of demand. This part of the education service at present receives extremely limited resources, yet this is where the greatest latent demand for education is likely to be centred, and where, with increasing unemployment, earlier retirement, and greater leisure, more and more people will look for educational opportuni-

ties. The Council's survey provides strong evidence for this. In response to the question *"what sort of course would you like to do for interest rather than for your job?"* nearly two-thirds (62% of men and 59% of women) responded, indicating a demand for a wide range of subjects as Table 22 shows.

TABLE 22 Courses to be taken out of interest rather than for work*

All who would like to take a course out of interest = 100%	All	Men	Women
Subject areas	%	%	%
Arts and crafts	22	15	28
Languages	13	14	12
Cookery, domestic science	12	2	22
Sports, physical education	11	14	8
Building trades, plumbing, carpentry	10	16	4
Engineering, science	10	17	2
Needlework	10	—	19
Gardening, horticulture	9	8	9
Music	8	10	7
History	5	5	5
English	3	2	3
Photography	2	3	2
Nursing	2	1	3

* *Main subjects only listed*

Source: ACACE, *Adults: their educational experience and needs* (1982)

Lack of appropriate modes of study

4.30 Even where the content and location of provision is appropriate, the mode of study may not be. The rigid structures of face-to-face teaching and regular time-tabling debar many potential students. For this reason correspondence learning has always attracted many adults: it has been estimated that in one year British correspondence colleges have some 360,000 students, of whom just over half reside in Britain.[41] The Open University receives about 50,000 applications each year for its first degree courses and has had the resources to register about 20,000 new students a year. Such bodies as the Open University and the National Extension College have led the way in using other media to enrich basic written materials in a variety of forms often described as open or distance learning systems. The BBC has a long tradition of adult education broadcasting and both the independent television network and the BBC have provided

opportunities for people to undertake systematic study at home.

4.31 This varied approach to learning offers adults greater flexibility in their patterns of study. With very few limitations people can study when, where and at a pace convenient to themselves — a considerable advantage to those many adults who are often unable to make a regular commitment to other forms of study. Research evidence[42] shows that many students choose to study in this way because its flexibility allows study to be fitted into the demands of earning a living and maintaining a family without too great a sacrifice. In view of the advantages both to adult learners and educational providers, and particularly since developments in micro-electronics could make distance learning an even more attractive proposition in the future, the potential for this mode of study within the public education system, where it is not as yet well represented, deserves more attention. Chapter 8 considers this in more detail.

Lack of appropriate tuition

4.32 While more adults can be expected to choose to continue their education through distance learning, many will still want to benefit from face-to-face tuition. But the teaching methods used in initial education are not always suitable for adults. Adult learners often bring to their learning a determination to succeed, because they have deliberately chosen to study for a specific purpose. Because of their wider experience of life, they are able to appreciate the relevance of their learning in ways not possible for younger students, and they can generally take a much more active part in their own learning. They are active volunteers for learning. They also face other problems which the young do not. Having spent time away from regular study, many adults are no longer familiar with the techniques of study, and they may often require individual help to overcome these difficulties and acquire the necessary skills. Educators need to take account of these different strengths and weaknesses.

SITUATIONAL BARRIERS

4.33 There are a number of other obstacles to both full-time and part-time study which are connected with adults' daily lives. Parents often find it difficult to study unless they can arrange for their children to be looked after. Students with school age children can often be helped by minor changes to the timetable so that they can attend while their children are at school. Parents with children below school age need reliable creche and nursery facilities. This assistance with adults' family commit-

ments is already available in some educational institutions, but it must become much more widely available if adults are to enter education more easily in future. This will call for a change of attitude by providing authorities, which will need to regard expenditure on child care for mature students as equally legitimate as spending on car parks and sports facilities for younger students.

4.34 The time barrier also appears in the way that so much provision is only available in full-time blocks of a year or even three years. Many people find part-time attendance easier, many will have no other choice, even if it means completing a course over a period of five or six years. An alternative possibility is a mixture of full-time and part-time attendance, perhaps with breaks between different sections of the course, or attendance for part of a course at one institution with subsequent completion at another perhaps in a different part of the country. The further development of modular courses and the wider acceptance of credit transfer will be necessary for this. Some of these developments are discussed more fully in chapters 6 and 8.

4.35 A more specific application of the time barrier is the setting of upper age limits for entry to some courses. There are many opportunities in the education and training field where only the young are accepted, particularly for apprenticeships. This substantial limitation on adults must be changed.

4.36 While many adults will continue to prefer to study in the evenings and at weekends, there is a growing need to provide a wide range of adult general education in the daytime. Daytime provision is likely to be preferred by many housewives, unemployed people, the elderly, and shift workers for whom the daytime may be the only time available for study.

4.37 Much wider arrangements for paid leave from work are going to be necessary for some important areas of study like basic education, trades union and industrial relations studies, and pre-retirement education.

4.38 These situational barriers could in general be relatively easily overcome by a more imaginative and flexible attitude to time, both in the scheduling of provision and in the length of time allowed for completing courses. Adult students will continue to be excluded from study opportunities unless institutions make a much more varied use of time.

EDUCATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

4.39 Many courses are designed on the basis that the students have achieved a given level of educational attainment. Sometimes this is assumed, but entrance qualifications are more often specified — generally as passes in stipulated examinations. Candidates without the specified qualifications are not normally admitted. For young people the achievement of the required educational qualifications is normally accepted as a reasonable assurance that they have the skills and knowledge to benefit from a course of further study. For adults, however, it is not always either suitable or necessary to insist on the required qualifications before admission. It is not always suitable because such courses are designed for the needs of the young and not for adults. It may also not be necessary because many adults will have already acquired the skills and knowledge required to pursue their chosen study successfully. Thus in widening the opportunities for adults to re-enter education, admissions procedures are needed to identify suitable candidates who do not have the entrance qualifications normally required of the young. There must also be provision for those adults not accepted for admission to acquire the skills and knowledge to allow them to be admitted. These issues are discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

SUMMARY

4.40 This chapter has considered the main barriers to access to existing provision for different types of potential adult students. Some of these barriers are easier to remove than others, and some will cost more to remove than others. It will require a determined effort by many people — politicians, employers, trades unionists, administrators, teachers and students — to eradicate the entrenched attitude that education for adults is less important than education for children. Those working in the initial education system must similarly ensure that all children leaving school now do so knowing that their education is not finished and that they will want and need to continue it throughout their adult lives.

4.41 Some of the more tangible barriers such as the structure and form of provision can be removed at little or no cost except the expenditure of creativity and imagination. The ways in which buildings are used and furnished similarly need not incur any large new expenditure. There may well be more difficulty in achieving the required changes in the patterns of education provision and admission procedures. The long-standing dominance of the initial education system makes it difficult to reconsider the validity of some of the assumptions underlying

its organisation. These problems and their possible solutions are discussed more fully in later chapters. But it is clear from the success of some institutions and many adult students that almost every barrier to access has been broken down somewhere by somebody. What is now needed is for these individual lessons to be learnt from and applied widely, if not universally, as a matter of course.

Chapter Five
INFORMATION, ADVISORY AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

5.1 In the past twenty years, and particularly since the publication of the Russell Report in 1973,[43] there has been increasing concern about the narrowness of the so-called 'socio-economic profile' of the adult student population: this calls into question the appropriateness of the existing educational provision for those outside that narrow profile. As the adult student population continues to be unrepresentative of the adult population as a whole, closer attention needs to be given to such matters as publicity, fee levels, the location and timing of courses, and the ways in which courses are organised. This has resulted in some new approaches to people previously not reached, especially those seen as 'educationally disadvantaged', and to some new routes into further and higher education for those without the conventional entry requirements. Many educators have shown commendable determination in extending provision in this way to people who had previously seen no place for themselves in the education system — but the crucial need for accessible information, advisory and counselling services has still to be generally acknowledged. One of the most common reasons which prevents adults from taking up educational opportunities is their lack of knowledge of them.[44] Many people are unable to obtain full and accurate information about what is available or guidance about what is most appropriate to their needs.

5.2 The Council has already considered this problem in some detail in its report on *Links to Learning*,[45] where it was argued that the answer lay in the establishment of local educational guidance services for adults to provide information, advice and counselling for adults wanting to continue their education. The report acknowledged that there is already *"a bewildering variety of possible starting points"* for people seeking information about educational provision: *"public libraries, citizens' advice bureaux, job centres, local newspapers and radio stations, as well as the institutions which actually offer the educational opportunities and the local education authorities and other agencies which maintain them, all provide information ... but there is little attempt to co-ordinate these ..."* The conclusion drawn in the report was therefore that specialist local services were needed to deal specifically with information about education and that these *"local guidance services should be co-operative and collaborative ventures rather than the exclusive*

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preserve of any one professional group or institution". When the report was prepared in 1979 there were no more than 18 of these local services in existence; by late 1981 it was possible to compile a list of almost 40.[46] But these local services are still mostly in the early stages of development, operating on 'shoestring' budgets with little financial assurance for their future.

5.3 Other recently published reports have also referred to the need for more readily available information services. The policy paper on continuing education and training by the Central Policy Review Staff[47] stressed the importance of having educational 'brokering' facilities in higher education to provide an independent link for information and negotiation between providers and potential students. The Manpower Services Commission has argued in its proposals for 'Open Tech' course schemes that *"students and employers will need to know that schemes are available, be able easily to receive full information and advice and to know what steps are required of them"*.[48] The Department of Education and Science in its discussion paper on *Continuing Education*[49] considered generating and channelling demand for short courses through information networks and possible *"regional brokerage schemes ... to bring educational institutions and industry closer together"*.

5.4 Thus there is no lack of awareness about the need for information services and there is little doubt that their presence would greatly improve the effectiveness of educational provision for adults — both by making better use of existing provision and by informing the providers about unmet local demands. The present lack of locally available information, advice and counselling restricts the reach of the education service, and this restriction is likely to become more evident as the supply of educational opportunities for adults increases. It is also an unnecessary restriction which could be removed at comparatively little cost, if local education authorities, working in co-operation with other providing bodies, were to seek ways of establishing or supporting the establishment of information, advisory and counselling services for adults throughout the country. The main principles, already fully covered by the Council in *Links to Learning*, are briefly restated below with suggestions for action to help in the early setting up of effective local services.

5.5 The potential adult student's first straightforward requirement is information. Good information services, which allow people to find out quickly what is available, could lead to an increased

demand for education and to a more effective use of the opportunities already available. But since there is still relatively little knowledge about the most efficient ways of organising educational information services, there needs to be some careful appraisal of the present operational practices; and this needs to be done as soon as possible in view of the vulnerability of some of the existing local services and the closure in the past two or three years of several others. As a clearer picture emerges of the 'best practices' available, educationalists should be in a strong position to decide which methods of providing information are most suited to their own areas.

5.6 The Council is currently undertaking a limited enquiry along these lines with the particular aim of finding out more about users' attitudes to the presently available information services.[50] This is being carried out alongside research financed by the British Library into the suitability of public libraries, compared with other agencies, as information points for education enquiries from adults. It is reasonable to suppose that the public library system could provide a sound base for this form of information — at relatively small additional cost within its widely established function as a public information service. The network of branch libraries provides locally well known centres for communication with the general public. Libraries can present publicity displays and support educational information facilities through their extensive local and national reference sources. It is much less clear whether librarians can go beyond the giving of information to educational advice and counselling without additional resources and the support of the education sector. The libraries' information systems might consequently be most effectively developed in conjunction with local educational guidance services for adults. It is therefore to those local services that the Council accords a high priority.

5.7 The results of these enquiries could help to form the basis for a number of pilot projects, possibly initiated and funded by the Department of Education and Science to provide experience and guidance on the most effective ways of organising information, advisory and counselling services at the local level. One of these projects might examine how information on educational provision could best be put on computer for public and institutional use. This would help to establish the most efficient ways of collecting, updating and disseminating information through the use of new technology, and would reveal the problems in collecting and classifying data from publicly maintained educational institutions (including universities) and

from voluntary and other statutory bodies offering educational opportunities. The project's conclusions could usefully be related to the complementary concerns in the findings and recommendations of the DES sponsored credit transfer feasibility study.

5.8 Other pilot projects could examine all aspects of the organisation, staffing, financing and publicity required for educational guidance services for adults, including the three different organisational arrangements identified in *Links to Learning*:[3]

- The first of these is the 'Link Chain' type of organisation which relies on volunteer staff drawn from adult educators and counsellors or from professionals in other fields, and sometimes includes volunteers recruited from the general public. The service is made known through directories naming the volunteers within the link chain, and potential students can be immediately referred to the most appropriate volunteer. This model is generally not very expensive to run since its costs are often absorbed by the institutions providing the volunteers. It can also serve areas with a scattered population which could not be so easily met by a centralised service. There is, however, no organising centre feeding accurate and up-to-date information to the volunteer links making up the chain, no single point of initial contact for the public, and volunteers may not be eager to keep comprehensive records. This type of service can be helpful to those who gain access to it, and it has ready-made contacts for relaying information back to the educational system through its educationist volunteers, but it can be haphazard in practice.

- The second is the 'Centre' type which offers a centralised service, often with professional trained staff, through a single point of contact with the public, although the service has to have town centre premises if it is to be convenient for large numbers of people. This model is likely to be effective from the user's point of view, although the centre may not necessarily be able to maintain close links with educational institutions. It may therefore be limited in its ability to encourage changes in education provision which would be needed to satisfy unmet demands.

- The third is the 'Link Chain Centre' which combines the positive features of the other two types. It has a link chain of volunteers drawing on existing resources of personnel, information, and other services, and an organising centre to provide counsellor training, a standard format for assessment, and a single point of contact for the public. The centre uses the link chain for referrals, and the volunteers in the chain can become outreach workers to establish the service at the most

local level. This model can only succeed through co-operation among existing education and guidance agencies to generate the extra resources which cannot be separately provided by the co-operating agencies.

5.9 These pilot projects should yield sufficient experience and information to enable and encourage local education authorities and other local educational bodies to design services most appropriate to their own areas. They should not be expected to provide definitive answers, but enough should be learned to allow services to be set up and run more efficiently and effectively than they might otherwise be.

5.10 The prime need is for reliable and easily accessible information on all the educational opportunities available to adults. However, the needs do not stop there. Some enquirers will need to go beyond straight information to advice about whether what they are looking for is best suited to their particular needs and whether and where something more appropriate might be available. A few will be looking for much more detailed counselling, where the choice of appropriate education depends on first identifying what they want to do in their lives. Many educational enquiries turn out on closer inspection to have direct connections with work — getting a job, getting promotion in the present job, or changing to a new job. These demands call for trained staff. No clear line can be drawn between information, advice and counselling — the request for one can quickly extend into the need for the others.

5.11 These educational information, advisory and counselling services for adults need not be expensive. They are not a substitute for such established services as the Citizens' Advice Bureaux and the Careers Service. Instead they fulfil a specialist function to complement other services and there is much to be gained from keeping each distinct, each with a different emphasis to its work but working closely together in the interests of those whose needs may overlap their respective spheres. Because educational guidance services for adults perform a specialised function, they do not usually require many full-time staff. A service in Belfast has run for over a decade on a small annual grant with one full-time director and secretarial support. Similarly, the educational brokerage units established in recent years in the United States, with very few full-time staff supported by part-time volunteers, were set up originally through small grants of federal money; they nevertheless handle large numbers of enquiries, provide information, and offer general advice as well as detailed counselling.[51]

5.12 The main beneficiaries of educational guidance services are the individual users, but it does not necessarily follow that these users should be asked to pay for the service. These services also benefit the providers of education because by encouraging a greater take-up of existing provision, they help to lower the unit costs, and by providing valuable information on the nature of local and national demand, they help in the planning of provision. Nobody should be deterred from seeking information, advice and counselling simply because of the level of fee that might be charged.

5.13 In *Links to Learning* the Council acknowledged that any proposals calling for additional expenditure at a time of economic stringency had to be realistic and reasonable. In reaffirming the need for small sums of extra public expenditure to provide educational guidance services for adults, the Council is concerned to achieve two objects: first, that all adults interested in, and in need of, learning opportunities should have access to reliable information; and second, that all providers of education for adults should become more aware of these needs which are not at present being expressed through informed demand. The Council therefore seeks to encourage all local education authorities and other providing agencies to co-operate in the early establishment and continued support of local educational guidance services for adults.

Chapter Six
WAYS IN AND THROUGH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

RANGE OF PROVISION

6.1 The most important way of beginning to ensure that as many adults as possible have access to education is to make available a wide range of provision. In *Towards Continuing Education*[52] the Council identified different kinds of continuing education provision, all of which it believed were important. The responses to that discussion paper agreed about the importance of many of these areas, but there was no clear agreement on the priorities among them. However most respondents did agree on the importance of the increasingly widening scope of adult general education. For many people this general provision provides all the educational opportunities they want and need, and they are easily able to find their way in and through it. For others, this general provision performs a different but equally important function: it provides the initial entry point through which they can move into other areas and levels of study of whatever kind. As its title indicates, this chapter is primarily concerned with ways in and through the educational system: these routes are already numerous, but they are still not numerous enough nor well enough signposted.

LACK OF EDUCATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

6.2 The lack of educational preparedness and certificated qualifications discourages and even prevents many adults from returning to study. Many may be regarded as educationally disadvantaged — for a variety of reasons which have nothing to do with their innate ability. Many courses, as noted in chapter 4, are designed on the assumption that their students have already attained a given level of knowledge or studied a particular content area. Course entry is itself usually selective, particularly in certificatable courses, and that selection is generally made on the basis of specially designed entrance examinations or of other examinations already passed. Most often these examinations are designed for assessing the academic ability of school pupils, both in content coverage and assessment method; and the examination syllabus is therefore closely related to schoolwork. At best this form of assessment fails to take any account of adults' life and work experience; at worst it may prove to be totally irrelevant. Even where there are no specific *educational* entry requirements, many adults lack the confidence and the skills to return to study with any success. At a more fundamental level some adults lack the prior skills and

knowledge needed even to consider entering into any formal study.

6.3 Thus the ways needed for adults to get back into education have to provide for many different requirements: to provide basic education, to increase confidence, to impart study skills, to bridge knowledge gaps, to up-date obsolescent knowledge, and to assess actual and potential ability. No single tidy set of arrangements can meet all these needs. There will be differences in content and the forms in which the provision should be made: full-time courses can be appropriate for some adults, others will prefer or need part-time or distance learning opportunities.

NEED FOR BASIC EDUCATION SKILLS

6.4 Clearly it is those adults who already have educational qualifications who find it easiest to re-enter the education system. But there are many without the skills and knowledge required for the education they want to pursue, and they need basic education to equip them as quickly as possible with the necessary skills in literacy and numeracy and, for example, in English as a second language. The adult literacy campaign and the more recent initiatives in numeracy tuition have revealed the extent to which many adults are at present excluded from most existing educational opportunities. Priority needs to be given to extending the provision of basic education for adults to ensure that those with the lowest standard of general education can take the first steps towards improving their educational attainment.

6.5 The Council published its views and recommendations on a national strategy for adult basic education in 1979[53], but the full needs are still far from being met. It is often argued that the best way of improving the basic standard of education in the general population is to tackle the problem 'at source' — in the schools: thus if more resources were devoted to remedial school education, so that no child left school without at least an effective grasp of the 3Rs, the 'problem' of adult illiteracy and innumeracy, and other basic deficiencies, would disappear. This is a Utopian argument: even if the numbers of people leaving school illiterate are reduced, there will still be many casualties in the school system. The 'at source' argument also fails to acknowledge that up to three million adults are still today in varying degrees illiterate and effectively debarred from entering most educational opportunities. This state of affairs may have been acceptable when economic and social change moved slowly; it cannot be accepted when unprecedented

economic and social changes are putting an increasing premium on adaptability. Unless this section of the population is to be left even more poorly equipped to meet the future than it is now, it becomes an urgent priority to create an effective system of basic education for adults.

NEED FOR POST-BASIC EDUCATION

6.6 Even if the opportunities for adult basic education were to be greatly extended, the existing gap in provision between this level and the level of competence in formal education represented by such examinations as the GCE O-level and the Certificate of Secondary Education, would still remain. There are many people who, while they cannot be regarded as illiterate, are nevertheless not sufficiently well equipped to embark directly on further education. There is a noticeable lack in the current educational scene of full-time and intensive part-time courses for adults whose standard of general educational attainment is low. Provision, such as the Special Adult Learning Programme in Bedfordshire, is not widely available and even in the main opportunity for full-time adult basic education — the preparatory courses in the MSC's Training Opportunities Scheme — the number of participants (two or three thousand a year) is very small in comparison with the numbers in need of such provision; and the TOPS preparatory courses are not available part-time. Many adults prefer part-time provision (most indeed will have no other option) either in the evening for those in employment or part-time during the day for, as an example, married women with children. It is not realistic to restrict the main study opportunities at this level to those who are unemployed *and* prepared to undertake a full-time preparatory TOPS course. Because the teaching emphasis has to be on meeting individual needs, it is rarely possible or advisable to offer a tightly structured curriculum; adults need to be free to attend according to their willingness and ability.

6.7 The Council attaches great importance to the adequate provision of general education for adults at this level. Adequate provision means ready availability during the day as well as in the evenings, full as well as part-time attendance, and in places accessible without difficulty. Important benefits would flow from the widespread establishment of these facilities, not least the economic advantage of ensuring that the labour force can acquire the necessary educational base on which to build effective training and retraining. Every local education authority should establish these facilities and, because of the importance

of this type of education, adequate financial support should be made available to the students.

NEED FOR 'RETURN TO STUDY' COURSES

6.8 Many adults, who have already achieved a fair standard of education, for a variety of reasons lack either the confidence or the study skills necessary to return to study. This is particularly true of women who have been out of paid work and education for several years. Hence the need for opportunities to help people returning to learning: opportunities at local colleges for those preferring face-to-face tuition, and independent learning opportunities for those wishing to study on their own. Examples of the first type are the 'Fresh Horizons' and 'Return to Study' courses; the second type is exemplified by the National Extension College with its 'How to Study Effectively' course and other multi-media provision offering distance learning of this kind. Most of these courses are short and frequently part-time. They can be hampered by some of the existing financial and organisational arrangements; this could be remedied if the changes suggested in the DES discussion document[54] on post-experience vocational courses so as to promote their wider provision were also applied to this type of short non-certificatable course. These study skills courses are for many adults the necessary prerequisite to a successful return to learning. Much more of this kind of provision is therefore needed.

ACCESS AND BRIDGING COURSES

6.9 Equally, those who already have a fair standard of education still need to acquire the knowledge and skills for the entry requirements to higher academic and professional education. The case for providing adult basic education is widely accepted, but there is less general agreement about the need for special advanced 'access' or 'bridging' courses: some might argue that those who want the entrance qualifications for higher education can, for example, take GCE A-level courses in further education colleges. This ignores the distinctive needs of adults — their patterns of living and working, their practical experience of life, their motivation and their possible frustration in being obliged to study courses designed for school-leavers. Adults need to be able to climb the qualification ladder without having to start on the bottom rung. The best way of achieving this is to provide specially designed courses for adults to enable them to attain the desired standard as rapidly as possible.

6.10 The 'access' courses currently available to adults are not evenly distributed across the country. A pioneering and highly

successful venture in this field is the 'New Opportunities for Women' course at Hatfield Polytechnic which has now provided a part-time degree course for those who have successfully completed the access course. A more recent example is the full-time one year course launched at the City and East London College and Paddington College; successful completion allows entry to some degree courses at, for instance, the Polytechnic of North London. One important aim of this linked course has been the recruitment of students from ethnic minorities, and the results have been sufficiently rewarding for the Inner London Education Authority to decide that this access year should be eligible for discretionary student awards — an encouraging precedent. Another example of successful part-time access study is the pre-degree course at Preston Polytechnic; this consists of regular evening seminars from January to June covering general skills and appropriate subject areas to introduce the students to other possible study options at the Polytechnic and elsewhere.

6.11 A related need, to which attention has been drawn in a recent study[55], is 'bridging' courses in science and technology. Most of the existing provision, perhaps inevitably since the main target group so far has been married women returners, is in the social sciences and humanities. This restricted curriculum can obviously affect students' choices of subsequent courses and eventual employment. Yet many adults and particularly women can do extremely well in mathematics, science and technology, given the opportunity and encouragement. Specially designed courses could do much to bridge the gap between the lack of appropriate school background and confidence and higher education entry levels.

6.12 The Open College in the North West of England offers another coherent programme of access provision. This scheme was initially set up by the Nelson and Colne College in association with six other further education colleges, Preston Polytechnic and Lancaster University. Thirty different study units are available including the arts and humanities, social studies, mathematics and physical science, together with single units on study techniques and scientific method. The aim is to provide an adult alternative to GCE A-level as a criterion for entry to higher education; it is accepted as such by Lancaster University and Preston Polytechnic.[56] The Open College merits serious attention because its tuition is designed specifically for the needs of adults seeking entry to higher education, and its experience could be useful in moving towards the national acceptance of alternatives to GCE A-level qualifications for mature applicants.

The need for alternative *admissions* procedures into higher education for unqualified adult applicants still remains, but the Open College approach does offer these unqualified applicants the chance of bringing themselves up to the required standard fairly quickly, and it could help admissions staff in making borderline decisions about entry to higher education. Given a realistic choice between risking early failure through unprepared entry to higher education and taking a recognised access course to prepare for subsequent admission, many adults are likely to prefer the second route.

6.13 The Council attaches great importance to the national provision of access and bridging courses for adults. The achievement of this calls for the Department of Education and Science to take steps to encourage the provision of such courses regionally and locally. All further and higher education institutions need to ensure that for each course normally requiring GCE A-level qualifications of young applicants, there are suitable access and bridging courses available to adults, either within the institution itself or organised in conjunction with other public educational institutions. All local education authorities must secure adequate facilities in their areas for these access and bridging courses, and students registered on these courses should be eligible for appropriate financial support. In addition access provision through independent and distance learning should be actively promoted for those who are unable to attend for face-to-face tuition.

ALTERNATIVE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULTS

6.14 The preceding paragraphs, in concentrating on the broadening of specially designed educational provision for adults at different levels and entry points, have ignored the question as to whether such courses should provide qualifications in their own right. There is a view that adults should simply be helped to the stage where they can obtain the same qualifications as are normally taken by school-leavers. Another view is that if academic qualifications are necessary, then an alternative route to school-leaving qualifications should be provided for adults. A third approach is that any qualifications broadly equivalent to the stated entrance requirements should be acceptable in their place. Yet another proposal, which is now gaining currency, is that adults are equally able to demonstrate their competence through life and work experience and this should be recognised as a possible alternative to the conventional entrance requirements. Others go further and advocate open entry facilities for adults, so that they can find out for themselves whether they have the ability to progress: the Open University is largely,

and successfully, based on this entry principle. These different views are considered below.

6.15 Most further and higher education courses have academic entry requirements designed to admit only those who have already demonstrated their apparent competence to follow the course successfully. This, it is argued, reduces the likelihood of failure and the consequent waste of time, effort and money. With school-leavers, admissions staff have little to judge by except their previous academic achievements; hence the public examination system provides a filter through which young adults must pass to extend their education beyond the minimum leaving age. Even for the young the filter is not necessarily very accurate: a recent analysis indicated *"significant but rather mediocre"* correlations between GCE A-levels and subsequent degree results for given university subject combinations.[57]

6.16 If it is accepted that entry requirements are necessary for adults but that the existing GCE A-levels are not suitable, then should there be some new alternative — an adult A-level as it were? Some GCE examination boards have already shown interest in developing such alternatives. The danger in setting up new 'adult' examinations is that they could quickly become no more than an alternative ladder to the existing A-level system. However, the counter-argument is that studying for a recognised qualification does provide a useful incentive and its acquisition can strengthen confidence. For this reason the Council considers that research and development work should be undertaken on adult alternatives to the GCE A-level examination system.

6.17 The approach that broadly comparable qualifications should be acceptable not as equivalent to, but in place of the stated requirements, has been followed for some time by the Council for National Academic Awards and the Universities Central Clearing House on Admissions in relation to such qualifications as ordinary national certificates and diplomas. The Standing Conference on University Entrance and the CNAA both accept Open University foundation course credits as meeting their normal entrance requirements. There is evidence that the students admitted in this way make as satisfactory progress as the more conventionally qualified entrants. These arrangements are valuable, although not yet widespread or uniform in application, but there is still a problem in informing and advising individual adult students about these possibilities. Over the past few years increasing numbers of applicants have been asking for alternative qualifications to be considered

either for entry to, or exemption from part of, a course. Many already have some form of qualification, others have started but not completed a qualification course. The final decision must be a matter of judgement by admissions staff, but this judgement could be greatly helped by a national information service enabling institutions and applicants to find out the negotiable value of different kinds of previous study. This could be achieved through the proposed information service on educational credit transfer, which it has been suggested should cover both the acceptability of qualifications for entry at the beginning of a course and for advanced standing.[58] If this information service were to include information on initial course entry, it would be performing an important function. It is also equally as important that educational institutions adopt a more liberal policy towards equivalence, and make this widely known both to potential students and their advisers.

6.18 It does not follow, of course, that formal entry requirements are necessarily appropriate for adults: there are grounds for suggesting that a different admissions approach be used. Adult applicants should not be rejected simply because they do not have the requisite qualifications. Three reasons in support of this view are: adults may have acquired knowledge, skills and experience since leaving formal full-time schooling which adequately equip them for some particular course of study, even though they lack the usual academic qualifications; adult learners often display more persistence and a stronger need to succeed than school-leavers; many adults have suffered educational disadvantages which have nothing to do with their ability.

6.19 There is evidence both in this country and elsewhere about the success of unqualified adult entrants to higher education.[59] Adults make their own decisions quite early in a course whether or not to continue their studies: those who get over this initial hurdle (frequently related to the pressures of domestic circumstances and jobs) usually continue their studies as well as, if not more successfully than, younger students. It is a common enough experience among teaching staff in further and higher education that adult students can be extremely rewarding to teach. They are able to contribute to their studies their wider experience of life and they are keen to make the most of their study opportunities. This suggests that, in adapting admissions procedures for adult applicants without the normal academic entry requirements, account must be taken of their skills and knowledge acquired elsewhere *and* of their strong desire to complete their studies successfully.

6.20 While there is evidence to support a more liberal approach to the admission of unqualified adults, it does not follow that open entry — the dropping of all entry requirements — is desirable in itself. It indicates rather that strict adherence to academic requirements can exclude many otherwise potentially successful adult students. Open entry cannot be advocated for every case. Many courses require specialised skills and knowledge and the most common way of demonstrating their prior acquisition (though not the only way for adults) is through gaining the appropriate preliminary qualifications. Even those courses which do not call for prior specialist knowledge and skills, in for example some arts and social science courses, can still require a high standard of general education from an intending student. Therefore, there are many instances where open entry without safeguards can be wasteful and destructive — wasteful of the time and effort of staff and students and of public funds, and destructive of the confidence and hopes of those who enter only to fail. Hence for unqualified adult applicants there need to be selection procedures which, while taking account of the relevance of the applicants' present experience and future potential, do not simply raise false hopes for those who are not adequately prepared.

6.21 Many further and higher education institutions do have alternative entry procedures for mature students without the normal academic entrance requirements. These vary from institution to institution and from course to course, and some institutions use them more often than others. Even so the proportion of unqualified adult applicants admitted to high level courses in this way is extremely small. It also appears that there is at present little coherence or generality in the application of these procedures.[60]

6.22 The long term adult residential colleges (such as Ruskin College and Coleg Harlech) have considerable experience of admitting unqualified adult applicants to full-time study. The great majority of their applicants have left school early with few or no formal qualifications, yet they find that most are fully capable of benefiting from higher education given the opportunity of taking appropriate preparatory courses. Their selection methods combine essay work, curriculae vitae, references and interviews: most of those selected in this way prove themselves capable of achieving university honours degree standard after four or five years full-time study. It would seem likely, to judge from this evidence, that there are also some adults without appropriate qualifications who could achieve this standard in the more usual three years.

6.23 The number of mature students entering polytechnics without the formal entrance requirements has been steadily increasing. Assessment of their performance has been sufficiently encouraging for the Council for National Academic Awards to publish advice to applicants indicating that, while the conventional entry requirements of GCE A-levels and their equivalents *"are at present considered to be the best available indicators of academic potential among school-leavers, the CNAA recognises that they may not be the most appropriate measurement of the ability of mature students. The CNAA does not therefore insist upon 'O' and 'A' levels ... for mature students, although it advises colleges to limit the percentage of students without qualifications that are admitted to any course. Admission to courses is at the discretion of colleges but the CNAA does, however, ask colleges to select very carefully by seeking evidence of some kind of candidates' capacity to meet successfully the demands of the course for which they have applied. If you are without paper qualifications, you should be prepared to undertake an interview and/or an appropriate test.*[61] These are obviously important concessions, which if they were more widely adopted would benefit many adults.

6.24 It might be argued that the decision to admit unqualified adult students should rest with the teaching staff, who should be best able to judge whether the applicants' skills and knowledge are sufficient for the course requirements. But these decisions are not always clear-cut and in the uncertainty of borderline cases adult applicants might prefer to make their own choice between entering a suitable preparatory course or taking their chance in the knowledge of the possible difficulties ahead. Leaving the decision to the applicants in borderline cases may break with the traditions of selection in Britain, but it could be to the advantage of some adults. At present even the most sophisticated examination and selection procedures are only imprecise predictors of subsequent educational achievement. Some institutions expect and plan for early drop-out and therefore provide an initial diagnostic period, which can benefit the students and the institution; the Preston Polytechnic predegree programme is an example of this, as is the provisional registration period at the Open University. It is better for potential students to have the chance of making decisions before rather than after formal entry, particularly in full-time courses and where those decisions may be critical to future career intentions.

6.25 The arguments and evidence offered above suggests that strict adherence to entrance qualifications will unnecessarily exclude

large numbers of potentially successful adult students. All institutions of further and higher education should review their admissions procedures for each course with academic or professional entrance requirements. Where reasonable, there should be a policy of open entry for adults. Elsewhere, alternative admissions procedures should be available to unqualified adult applicants for all courses, except those needing prior skills and knowledge available only through a previous course of formal education. Alternative admissions procedures for adults should assess whether the applicants' skills, knowledge and experience are sufficient and also take account of the applicants' potential and motivation. An initial diagnostic period should be available wherever possible. In borderline cases adult applicants should be informed of their assessment and offered the choice of entry or of a suitable preparatory course. Information on all these entry procedures should be made widely available.

CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCE AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

6.26 The principle of open educational access for adults is implicitly, if not explicitly, based on the idea that the experience adults have gained in their lives and work can contribute to their studies. The notion of experiential learning is not new: our apprenticeship system derives from it, and many professions — nursing, medicine, social work and teaching — integrate practical experience and academic instruction in their professional training. What is new is the increasing acceptance in North America and elsewhere that credit can be given for life experience, as distinct from the conventionally accepted periods of organised experiential learning. These trends have not yet manifested themselves in this country; the Open University in its extensive credit exemption and transfer arrangements has limited the granting of its credits to prior educational experience at the higher education level. A recently published study[62], which examines the operation of the experiential credit system in the United States and advocates its adoption in Britain, argues that the *"assessment of experiential learning, with all the curriculum implications which follow, is based on respect for what people know however they may have learned it. It enables a person to reveal what he knows instead of making assumptions about what he needs to reveal in order to be recognised as fit for further study. In some ways, therefore, recognition of experiential learning can offer a fresh start for the educational policy of equality of opportunity."* It seems likely that such moves will encourage the entry and re-entry of adults into education. Thus the suggestion by the Department of

Education and Science that their credit transfer feasibility study should be extended to include some assessment of the place of experiential learning in credit transfer is to be welcomed.

CREDIT STRUCTURES AND MODULAR COURSES

6.27 Any move towards granting credit for prior experience (whether related to education, work or life experience) has implications for the traditional pattern of integrated courses studied full-time over several consecutive years, which has so far largely characterised the initial education system in this country. The credit structure in North America allows students to transfer their credits to a variety of other institutions, extend their studies over time and add on credit for other forms of experience. This system's flexibility clearly benefits employed adults with families. It is also likely to respond more readily to the growing needs of technology and continuing professional development and training than the present rigid long course arrangements. Modular courses are advantageous both for full and part-time study. Many adults can organise their lives and jobs to take short periods of full-time study; few can study part-time for any length of time without a break to cope with work or family pressures. The Open University's decision to use a credit system from its inception has provided an important and successful example, which has been followed in a few polytechnics and universities who have found the move beneficial in some subject areas both to their institutions and their students.

6.28 Adults studying part-time can inevitably find their studies disrupted by the need to change jobs and move house. They need to be able to transfer in midstream to another course in another institution without losing academic standing; others may want to change to another subject area. Such transfers are undoubtedly easier, and sometimes only possible, if courses are constructed on a modular basis. At present some students do manage to transfer successfully to other institutions; many more might do so if the opportunities were clearly available and understood. There are some individual agreements between institutions on credit transfer and a national agreement between the Council for National Academic Awards and the Open University covering the Diploma in Higher Education and degree courses. And an increasing number of other qualifications are now available through modular study: the Technician Education Council and the Business Education Council have set an important lead in this. But there is still no agreement about the equivalence of those modular courses and their levels. In particular there remains the difficult question of the validity of

qualifications over time. The provision of agreed information on these questions would be a great help to potential students.

6.29 The report[63] of the DES sponsored feasibility study into educational credit transfer indicates that it would be feasible to establish a national information service capable of recording and providing information on credit transfer possibilities. The report recommends that an initial period of approximately five years would be needed to acquire and prepare the basic information and to organise its dissemination before the service could be offered first to institutional and thereafter to individual student users. The Council supports this proposal in the belief that this service would benefit further and higher education because the need for credit transfer will grow substantially with the entry of large numbers of adults into formal education, and because of the cost savings achievable through a national credit transfer information service. The Council believes that a system of educational credit transfer as envisaged in the Toyne Report, should be established as soon as possible.

CERTIFICATION IN CONTINUING EDUCATION

6.30 The argument that the existing certification in continuing education should be moulded into some kind of recognisable system is based both on the proposition that adults are encouraged by having something to show for their studies (for themselves and for employers) and on the alternative interpretation of the rich variety of available provision as a confusing maze without any identifiable exit. A discussion paper published by the National Council for Educational Awards in Dublin[64] acknowledged that an award system based on the accumulation of credits to meet the needs of continuing education, could conflict with the formal entry requirements for existing courses. It therefore proposed a new award level — a 'foundation certificate' to attract adults back into education on a 'second chance' basis, and provide an opportunity for those adults to progress through the existing NCEA higher awards system. This certification would have no formal entry requirements. The report also argued that work experience must be considered as an integral part of the educational process, and be recognised in the assessment for credit awards. Perhaps most importantly the report stated that the proposed accrediting and awarding system should ensure that its educational qualifications were recognised by other award systems and that its credits were transferable to other adult, professional and vocational education spheres. It would be premature to endorse these NCEA proposals, but much more attention does need to

be given to the whole question of certification, particularly in relation to equivalence and the recognition of qualifications by institutions and employers. However, it is not the Council's intention to suggest that certification is either necessary or desirable in all educational provision. To take account of adults' needs, new forms of assessment need to be developed, including the possibility of accumulating general education credits over an extended period of time. The Council therefore considers that it would now be appropriate to initiate a study of the value and feasibility of establishing a national framework for the certification of courses in continuing education.

Chapter Seven
ACCESSIBILITY OF INSTITUTIONS

7.1 A comprehensive system of continuing education will only evolve when the whole post-initial education sector contributes to its development. Universities, polytechnics, institutes of higher education, further education colleges, adult education colleges and institutes and centres, and voluntary bodies, all have a part to play in extending their provision for adults and encouraging the widest possible entry. Chapter 4 examined the present barriers to access. They are numerous and for very many adults difficult or even impossible to cross. All the post-school educational institutions must join in reducing those barriers so as to open up more and more study opportunities to students. In that way the supply of continuing education provision will become clearly recognisable and, as experience has shown, demand will respond. But if demand is to match and influence supply, more must be done to generate it.

7.2 In the Council's view the main source of this new demand has to be found at the most local level, and that is where the present institutional provision is weakest. The larger the institution, the less localised its efforts are likely to be. This chapter therefore considers the need for people to have access to education locally, the present limited facilities at local level, and the Council's proposal for a network of local 'front line' centres to stimulate, to provide in part for, and where appropriate to channel to other institutions, educational demands from the adult population. Advocating the possibilities of this kind of local centre does not of course shift the onus from existing institutions to improve their own arrangements so as to increase demand from adult students.

7.3 For many adults it is neither easy nor practicable to take up study opportunities which are not within easy reach of home or work. Those with work or domestic commitments, who can nevertheless fit education into busy lives, may have problems in finding additional time and money for travelling any distance to and from an educational institution. The elderly, the poor and those relying on public transport can be understandably reluctant or even unable to spend very much time and money on travel. Their opportunities for formal study are consequently restricted and their demand for education, which might otherwise be manifest, remains hidden. The accessibility of places in which adults can continue their education is therefore an important priority in educational planning.

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7.4 At present the facilities for adults wanting to continue their education locally are often inadequate, because in general there is not enough accessible local provision. This assertion may seem to deny the existence of the large number of educational institutions with adults among their students, but in most places their provision is not regarded by the general public as an accessible local source of learning to which adults would naturally turn. Colleges of further education, polytechnics and universities still cater primarily for the initial education of young adults, although a few of these institutions have in recent years worked hard and successfully to encourage the enrolment of adult students. But it remains true that the public continues to see most of them as places exclusively or largely for the education and training of young people. The education they offer is often expensive to provide, requiring highly trained staff, specialist accommodation, and extensive equipment. Their sphere of operation is as much regional as local and many of their young full-time and grant supported students regard their studies as equivalent to paid work. They are therefore prepared and able to move so as to live nearby or to travel the sort of daily distances which would otherwise be required for work. Even though many of these institutions have satellite premises away from their main centre, accessibility can still be limited because of the unsuitability of their operational arrangements to the demands of adult life, in which education is generally marginal to many other pressing interests. Often, though not always, the specialised nature of the education offered also prevents its being transplanted from the centre, at least not without loss of efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

7.5 Other bodies providing education for adults, such as the Workers' Educational Association and university extra-mural departments, aim to promote local educational activities over a wide geographical area. In doing this they necessarily have to make limited and sporadic use of premises put at their disposal by others. Each of the thirty or so short-term residential colleges draws its students from a much wider area than the immediate surroundings of its premises, and these facilities are therefore in effect regional or even national rather than local. Community centres are generally very suitable local meeting places for adults. But these centres have not been set up in every locality and, while they often promote educational opportunities, they cannot be expected to take on a predominantly educational role.

7.6 Local education authority provision for the education of adults is largely based in adult education institutes or centres. The

word 'institute' generally signifies a self-contained building assigned exclusively to adult education work sometimes with satellite accommodation in occasionally borrowed premises in surrounding areas. 'Centre' is a much less consistently used term. In some places it may mean a substantial 'prime use' establishment as just described for an institute.[65] But generally adult education centres do not have any recognisably separate buildings of their own. Instead they are either annexes or wings attached to schools ('dual use' premises) or much more frequently they rely on accommodation borrowed for short periods from other institutions — particularly schools ('shared use').[66] The provision made by these shared use centres is therefore often dispersed throughout an area, to the advantage of geographical accessibility and the disadvantage of having no clearly established physical identity.

7.7 There can be real difficulties in dual and shared use of school premises. At first sight this use of schools — for children during the day and for adults mainly in the evenings — seems attractive in making more effective use of buildings and equipment. However, the school generally has priority over the adult education centre. During the day the education of adults is strictly limited by the prime need to use the building for educating children. Much of the school equipment may be reserved only for use with the children and locked away at the end of the school day; often the head teacher, rather than the adult education principal, has the final word on what equipment adults may use. Neither are the physical structures of a school always particularly well adapted to the social needs of adults. Furniture and fittings may be designed for small children, few places can be set aside for social contact, caretakers are often keen to clear buildings early to make them ready for the next day. All are limitations on the social atmosphere in which the education of adults can best take place. These difficulties can be overcome when buildings, equipment and staff are regarded from the outset as resources at the disposal of the whole community. A few local education authorities have established community schools based on this concept, with a new approach to the design and furnishing of buildings as well as an attempt to re-order staff responsibilities and relationships. In at least one authority teaching contracts have been agreed so that staff can divide their time between teaching children and teaching adults. But, without an explicit policy of this sort implemented over a number of years, the dual and shared use of schools generally results in the subordination of the education of adults to the education of children.

7.8 Some adults are entirely content to study in a school, college, polytechnic or university; but others are not, because for them the return to education in that setting can raise memories of childhood failures, fears, or even rejection. This psychological barrier to access lies behind much of the adult population's reluctance to return to education after leaving school. For those whose earlier experience of education has been one of failure or, at least, non-achievement, school and college premises can be an uncongenial and even unacceptable point of re-entry. They need places which do not evoke memories of school, which are not impersonal in the way that many large post-school institutions can be, they need places which draw them into social and educational activities without threatening their self confidence. Without this, the return of adults to study is likely to remain largely confined to those who are already persuaded of the value of education and of their own ability to benefit from it.

7.9 Thus there are two main reasons for advocating the provision of a distinctive and accessible centre in each locality to which adults can look *first* in seeking to re-enter education: physical accessibility and psychological acceptability. These local front line centres should have an adult atmosphere with styles of provision sensitive to the many demands made on adults' time and energy. Their size should be related to the density of the local population, but they should not be so small as to be uneconomic nor so large as to be impersonal and unwelcoming. They should be open during the day as well as in the evenings, at the weekends as well as during the week, and they should have at least one full-time worker with organising and tutorial responsibilities. In a phrase, they might be seen as the *"educational service stations of the future"*.[67]

7.10 These centres should be a base from which much of the local educational activity for adults is co-ordinated, and to which adults can come as a first resort for educational information and advice, and other institutions can look for evidence of unmet local needs. They should be centres of learning, but they should certainly not be the exclusive providers of education for adults in their locality. Much more should and must take place elsewhere. Nevertheless, the centres should have their own teaching space conducive to adult learning. They should have facilities to assist independent learners, self-help groups and those learning 'at a distance'. They should be a source from which educational activity can be extended into the local community. Full-time and part-time organising staff should work together in the centres to co-ordinate the work of paid and

voluntary teaching staff, and to take educational opportunities to workplaces, homes, and local clubs and societies. The organising staff should work alongside statutory and voluntary bodies to mount joint projects. Each centre should be a local resource at the disposal of all adults to meet individual and community education needs. The adult learners themselves should be able to contribute to decisions about such matters as the sorts of educational provision to be offered and the fees to be charged. The centres' management boards should represent those who help to provide and finance their educational services and those who use them.

7.11 These local centres should become very widely known as a first point of re-entry to education for those who might not be attracted in any other way, and equally as a re-entry point to other parts of the continuing education system for those seeking the kinds of educational opportunities offered elsewhere. Where expensive equipment or specialist subject expertise is needed, or where the particular demand is too small to justify local provision, resources may have to be centralised in, for example, a further education college or a university which serves a wider area. The most effective balance between central and local provision clearly depends on different factors in different places. The important point is that local centres should not work in isolation. They should be the accessible entrance to the whole range of public education. It is important that each local centre should be one part of a coherently planned system of collaborating parts, through which adults can move freely to find appropriate ways and means to satisfy their educational needs, either within or outside their own neighbourhood.

7.12 The centres should be the responsibility of local education authorities. The form of organisation in each authority will very much depend on the facilities already available and the way they are organised, and on the geography of the area and its educational needs. The arrangements needed in country areas may be quite different from those in towns. Local development councils for adult education, where they exist[68], should be well placed to advise on these decisions. The most crucial decisions will be about the balance between centralised specialist services and the more generalist local services, and the way they fit together. This will not always be easy to decide, especially since it may call for new divisions of responsibility among institutions, perhaps cutting across the present working distinctions between vocational and general education.

7.13 The presence of a network of easily accessible local education

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centres for adults in each local education authority area is a key element in the creation of a comprehensive system of continuing education. Without this element, large sections of the adult population will still have difficulties in finding appropriate educational opportunities, or will still not be attracted back into education at all. At present relatively few local education authorities have an adequate network of conventional adult education centres. The setting up of a much more broadly conceived system of centres will consequently require a considerable shift in educational planning and decision making. But this is no more than the measure of change needed to begin to realise a fully comprehensive continuing education system. In this wider concept, consultative planning will need to be broadly based. The local development councils for adult education have already been mentioned as contributors to this planning in a local authority area. But there will need to be regional and even national appraisal of the requirements for the collaborative planning of continuing education provision. The regional advisory councils for further education are clearly well placed to assist in this, as are the local authority associations and the national education departments.

7.14 Any new network of centres is likely to be built largely on the foundation of the existing adult education services. This foundation is itself not very secure.[69] More full and part-time organisers and tutors will be required to cover the broader functions of these local continuing education centres. The buildings in present use as adult education centres would not in many places be adequate in number, space or character for the extended role envisaged here. But the provision of more suitable premises need not require a massive programme of new building. Instead the vigorous and imaginative use and adaptation of existing premises would not be expensive. The decline in the size of the child population offers an unrepeatable opportunity to make continuing educational use of surplus school accommodation for the benefit of the growing proportion of adults in the population. Selling school buildings for immediate capital gain is not always a sound economy in the education of the whole local community.

7.15 The capital costs of the proposed centres would be very low in comparison with the total capital expenditure on further and higher education. But local education authorities will not be able to meet even these modest capital and current costs unless there is national recognition of the increasing importance of the education of adults and unless public expenditure on education reflects that importance. If and when the pressure to cut

educational expenditure is eased and local education authorities are able and encouraged to invest more in providing for the education of adults, it should be possible over the next ten to twenty years to allocate new and transfer existing educational resources to the development and maintenance of a network of local continuing education centres in every local education authority area. This investment policy, actively applied, will give excellent returns — the ever larger numbers of adults returning to continue their education.

7.16 To realise this proposal for a network of front line continuing education centres as a distinctive local focus for the education of adults, the Council considers that all local education authorities should be required to publish and implement a plan (prepared in consultation with interested local bodies including the local development council for adult education) detailing:

- The overall accessibility within their area of suitable existing centres, existing buildings needing to be adapted, and any additional buildings required.
- The role of the centres in relation to the area's provision for post-initial education.
- The proposed staffing and management arrangements for each centre.

The Council also considers that the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales, in conjunction with the local education authorities and local authority associations, and assisted by the regional advisory councils for further education, should review the educational needs of adults with particular reference to the further education building programme and minor works allocations.

Chapter Eight
NEW PATTERNS OF LEARNING

PART-TIME LEARNING

8.1 At present the main opportunities for most young people to extend their education beyond the minimum school leaving age are through full-time study. This may extend over two years, and for those who go into higher education there may be a further three years or more of full-time study beyond that. Adults are generally not in a position to pursue long courses of full-time education. Their work and family commitments rarely allow them to break from employment for two or three years, to uproot their domestic life by moving house, or to live on the modest income provided by a student grant. Of course, some adults are able to take long full-time courses in further and higher education and in future no doubt many more, given the opportunity, would be both willing and able to fill the spare places left by any decline in the numbers of young people in full-time education. For most, however, part-time education will be the only, or the more attractive, choice since it allows them to continue their education and still maintain most of their other commitments. The Council therefore expects that, as the number of young people in full-time post-compulsory education decreases and as the need to encourage adults to re-enter education increases, there will be a significant shift towards part-time education.

8.2 At present part-time adult students experience many disadvantages. If they are in employment they may be unable to obtain release from work, and if they do obtain release it may be unpaid. Often they are obliged to study after a tiring day's work. They may also lose income, even when studying outside normal working hours, through loss of overtime. Part-time students (whether in employment or not) do not generally receive grants. They normally have to pay their sometimes substantial course fees from their own pockets, and meet other costs for books, study equipment and travelling. These obstacles can often be overcome only by those with the determination and good fortune to be able to accept severe limitations on their finances, work and family and social life. Their position cannot compare with that of young people in full-time education or even with that of young people studying on day-release courses.

8.3 There are great merits in the British system of full-time

education for young people beyond the compulsory school age, who are thus enabled to reach a high standard in the shortest possible time. But these merits ought not to overshadow an equally merited alternative. Part-time education offers advantages both to adult students and to the national economy, and these should not be overlooked. Perhaps the greatest advantage to the country is that most part-time learners already have a means of support. Much of the cost of full-time education is not incurred by education, but in maintaining the students. For young people these costs do arise in part-time education in, for example, paid release from work, and these fall on the employer. But the productive and earning capacity of those in employment remains intact and, even when people are released from work, their productive capacity is only reduced and not lost.

8.4 Since part-time face-to-face tuition usually requires more staff resources in proportion to its full-time equivalent, it can lead to some additional teaching costs. There can be a big difference in a teacher's workload between teaching say, one full-time course a week and five part-time courses one day a week. The amount of teaching time and the number of student hours may be the same, but there are five courses to be prepared rather than one, and that must mean more work for teachers. On balance, however, any additional educational costs are likely to be greatly outweighed by the absence of any significant need for student maintenance awards. For this reason — and in view both of adult preferences and of changing needs over the next twenty years — the promotion of part-time education, at least for adults, deserves a much higher priority than it has at present.

8.5 In the public education sector part-time study by adults has a low status, and opportunities for adults to study part-time have recently been declining. This low status is the result both of the traditional view that education is primarily concerned with the preparation of the young for adult life and of the need in the last thirty years or so to secure a much wider range of opportunities for the full-time education of young people beyond the minimum school leaving age. It would appear — at least to those dealing with the educational needs of adults — that behind many of the practices in the public education sector is the idea of full-time education as the norm against which part-time education is judged. Thus in the universities and in advanced and non-advanced further education, there are prescribed formulae for allocating resources to part-time education as a proportion of a corresponding full-time course. These 'full-time equiva-

lency ratios', by not taking sufficient account of the additional demands which part-time education may place on staff, deter many institutions from mounting part-time courses. Any institution changing the balance of its work from full-time to part-time, will be penalised because it will not be permitted to increase staff in proportion to the extra workload. Not surprisingly, many institutions seek to build up full-time work at the expense of equivalent part-time provision. To encourage the growth of part-time education, institutions need some recognition of the additional work involved and some incentive to undertake it. The Department of Education and Science has noted this difficulty in its discussion paper on continuing education[70], and it is to be hoped that recommendations, arising from the Department's consideration of responses to that paper, will offer some resolution of this particular problem and generally help the development of part-time study opportunities. The Council's view is that the full-time equivalency ratios at present laid down for the disposition of resources in further and higher education should be adjusted to take account of the additional workloads required for part-time education.

8.6 This would enable institutions to put an increasing emphasis on part-time education, but a more detailed study is still required if educational provision is to become more responsive to adult needs. This study should examine the practical difficulties facing adult students, particularly those wanting to study part-time, and should indicate how the existing structures of educational provision can be made more flexible to overcome these difficulties. Cost will often be the most immediate practical difficulty, and this is examined in more detail in chapter 10. Another is related to the appropriateness of the different modes of provision to adult life styles and especially to the time constraints under which most adults live. This calls for some appreciation of the length of time which adults can give to study, and the times of day most convenient for study among different sections of the adult population.

MODULAR COURSES

8.7 Many part-time courses require students to attend regularly over a lengthy period, particularly in study for academic and professional qualifications, where courses can extend over as much as five years. Few adults can maintain that kind of attendance. This difficulty can be largely overcome by providing courses on a modular basis. Modules, taught and examined as distinct entities within each course, allow part-time students to study only those parts of a course which they can manage at

any given time. Since credit is given for each module successfully completed, students can suspend their studies for a time to resume them later at the point where they left off, with the assurance (both for themselves and the teaching institutions) that they have already reached a suitable standard from which to continue further study. Modular course construction can also allow some students to study part-time on a full-time course. Full-time students can take all the required modules to complete the course in the shortest possible time, while the part-timers study alongside them without any need for any additional provision. They are free to follow as much or as little of the course as they can manage, and, if circumstances permit, they may even study full-time for a period.

8.8 Modular course construction has immense advantages for students. As already noted in chapter 6, there has recently been a considerable growth in these courses under the encouragement of such bodies as the Council for National Academic Awards, the City and Guilds of London Institute, the Royal Society of Arts, the Business Education Council and the Technician Education Council. Some of these courses, notably some validated by CGLI and TEC, show that modular arrangements need not be limited simply to courses of formal academic instruction. This form of provision should therefore be extended even further in the interest of adult learners.[71]

8.9 However, it has to be acknowledged that there can be difficulties in developing modular courses. Course planning may often take as much as five years to complete and an institution, unless it is sufficiently prepared, can find its commitment to modular courses becoming entangled in administrative complexity. It takes time to achieve a system which balances student convenience with administrative efficiency. A modular system also requires more emphasis on student counselling, because the wider range of choices increases the chances of making the wrong choice. Other problems arise with courses which rely heavily on interaction within a homogeneous learning group. Where courses cannot be specifically designed for heterogeneous groups (and this is not always possible), part-time students may find it difficult or even impossible to drop in and out of activities which depend for their success on the establishment of a group working together as a unit over an extended period. There are also difficulties about modular provision in courses with graded awards such as honours degrees. The universities, for example, have not introduced modular courses at the same speed as other institutions because they generally

regard their degree courses as an integrated and cumulative experience, which they consider would be impaired by separation into self-contained modules.

8.10 However most of these problems can be overcome. Modular courses offer great advantages to students, especially part-timers, in broadening the range of syllabus choices and attendance arrangements, and in allowing (where this is available) course credits to be accumulated towards some specific certification. While their widespread adoption may not be always practicable, the Council believes that there is scope for much wider provision of modular courses and considers that all publicly maintained institutions of further and higher education should be encouraged to adopt, wherever possible, a system of modular courses with appropriate accreditation arrangements. Such developments would be assisted by the provision of a national information service on educational credit transfer (see chapter 6).

SHORT FULL-TIME COURSES

8.11 Because most adults are unable to commit themselves to any extended full-time study, the development of continuing education will largely depend on an increasing provision of part-time study opportunities, but there will still be a need and a demand for short full-time courses lasting up to two weeks and sometimes linked with further study part-time. Courses of this length can provide intensive and effective learning at a level difficult to achieve in comparable hours (over two or three months) of part-time education. This may explain their popularity in industry. In the next few years the demand for vocational updating courses may be expected to grow rapidly; one important part of that demand will be short intensive courses for employees individually released from work or in groups directly sponsored by employers. The public education sector's present activity in this area will no doubt expand with appropriate incentives, as the DES discussion paper suggests.[72]

8.12 However, short full-time courses should not be thought of simply in terms of vocational updating. They can also be attractive to those wanting cultural, social or civic studies. Already large numbers of adults spend weekends and holidays in formal study programmes, and in future many more people are likely to be free to enrol in them either as an alternative to longer part-time courses or else, like the Open University summer schools, as a complement to part-time study. Short full-time courses are well suited to the needs of many adults,

and more provision of this kind would almost certainly promote a still stronger demand.[73] These courses could become a distinctive feature of continuing education provision. The recent closure of several short-term adult residential centres and the diversion of others away from general and cultural education, as economy measures, is a serious loss. The Council has published its views on *"this diminution of an already unjustifiably slender resource for adults wanting to study in a highly concentrated and effective way"*.[74] In maintaining and developing this slender resource, it should be recognised that, compared with long full-time courses, staff on short courses have proportionately heavier administrative and teaching workloads and more intensive contact with students. The Council therefore considers that short full-time courses of up to two weeks' duration should be notionally regarded as part-time courses for the allocation of resources, and for more generous treatment under the amended full-time equivalency ratios.

TIMING OF PROVISION

8.13 Part-time evening study is the most common mode of provision for adults, and will remain the most convenient for the majority of people in paid employment. But the timing of provision should be related to the different demands of daily adult life, and not only to the needs of those in work. Daytime attendance is attractive to the many adults who are not employed during normal working hours. The retired, for example, may be reluctant to go out in the evenings, especially in the winter, and housewives, heads of one parent families, shift workers and unemployed adults can also find that daytime study offers a more accessible and acceptable alternative to evening study. Even with an increase in daytime provision, some people would still encounter difficulties, for example, those, usually women, who have to be at home to look after young children. Some educational institutions have introduced timetables which allow these students to maintain their commitments to their children and to their study. Parents of children under school age often face difficulties because of a lack of child care facilities or the income to pay for child care while the parent is studying. A recent survey of child care facilities available to students[75] showed how the geographical unevenness of this provision is a major barrier to educational access, particularly for women. If people with very young children are to enjoy the available educational opportunities, there must be adequate child care arrangements. These might be more easily achieved by pooling the resources of a number of institutions. The Council therefore considers that all further and higher education institutions

should be encouraged to collaborate among themselves and with other agencies in providing a service of free or low-cost creche and nursery facilities of high quality for the children of adult students.

8.14 Shift workers can find regular study attendance difficult unless special arrangements are made. It is not usually practical to provide specifically for them because the level of demand is too small, except in the relatively few places where continuous process industries are concentrated. Places where fewer and longer shifts (the so-called twelve-hour system) and 'staggered' working arrangements such as four-day working weeks (designed to cover six days by rotating shifts) are being introduced, may offer the chance for experimenting with provision combining vocational and general education. Nevertheless, most educational programmes will still need to be planned on the conventional five-day week, and those working unconventional hours will need positive support from employers for special release. This may need to be established as a right, and incorporated in more general provision for educational leave, since it is educationally more efficient for people to study when they are fresh and alert than after a tiring day's work. Whether this leave should be paid raises questions of financial support which are considered later in chapter 10. Nevertheless there is a good case for establishing a system of educational leave for certain categories of employees, such as shift workers, who would otherwise be unable to maintain a regular attendance at a study centre. On grounds of economic and social priorities there might also be a case for extending this right to others for specific purposes.

DISTANCE LEARNING

8.15 The various ways so far discussed, in which educational provision can be better attuned to the circumstances of adult life, have been concerned with face-to-face tuition. It is equally important to offer adults alternative study methods through distance learning systems. Recent developments in distance learning methods combined with open access show clearly that many adult students have a very high regard for this mode of learning. At present most distance learning systems with open access are provided through broadcasting and through correspondence colleges. The language courses offered through radio and television, supported by printed material and cassettes, are just one example of the educational opportunities provided by broadcasters, often in collaboration with others. The private correspondence colleges in Britain are estimated to

be teaching about 100,000 students a year, although actual enrolment numbers are much higher because many students are registered on courses for several years. Correspondence tuition is perhaps the simplest form of distance learning available on an open access basis.

8.16 The public education sector has largely failed to provide for distance learning. With the exception of the Open University, virtually all the education offered by the public education sector is through face-to-face tuition. Yet distance learning, often including individualised learning, is well suited to the needs of many adults. The efficiency of modern distance learning systems is now sufficiently well proven to warrant substantial investment in them. That investment would lead to a more effective system of continuing education and be of immense benefit to the educational system as a whole.

8.17 The various developments in what is now being called 'flexi-study' should be strongly encouraged. Flexi-study enables adults to combine study both at home and in educational institutions, learning from centrally produced material but with the advantage of tutorial and other help being available to them locally at some further education colleges and adult education centres.[76] The Council considers that the Department of Education and Science should encourage further experiments in flexi-study and assess the effectiveness of these experiments.

8.18 The terminology used to describe the different forms of open learning is bewildering. The term *open learning* is often used to emphasise the system's greater accessibility in comparison with conventional courses of face-to-face tuition, and one of the crucial issues for the development of continuing education is how educational provision is to be made more accessible to adults. In any truly comprehensive system of continuing education, ways must be found of reaching sections of the adult population which would be otherwise unable or unwilling to participate in education. Open learning systems have this capacity. In the term *distance learning* the emphasis is on students learning at some distance from the institution responsible for organising their tuition. Sometimes it is taken to mean that no local tutorial help is available (as in many correspondence courses), but it is perfectly possible to combine the independent study of materials produced elsewhere with local tutorial help. *Independent learning* emphasises the learners' less direct dependence on the teacher. It need not

imply physical remoteness, indeed the term is often applied to methods (such as project work) used as integral parts of conventional school or college work. It is also applied in a more specific sense to some courses now available at the North-East London Polytechnic and Lancaster University, which come closer to the idea of *individualised learning*, where the course of study has been tailored to the needs of individual students, often with the implication that it has been 'individualised' by a teacher, who need not be far away.

8.19 All these terms have in common an emphasis on the relative autonomy of the learner. Students work on their own for the greater part of the time, calling on help when needed. Most often they learn from specially prepared texts. This approach is obviously suited to adults with an adequate educational background, many of whom are able to cope with largely autonomous study and may prefer the freedom it offers. Sometimes it is indeed the only method available to them.

8.20 Independent study through a specially prepared course is at present the most common form of distance learning. Correspondence courses are an obvious example, but in recent years this form of tuition has extended beyond written materials alone to include in the learning 'package' audio tapes and cassettes, records and radio and television programmes. This form of tuition is often aimed at learners without local assistance, but it can be more effective linked to local face-to-face tuition, as in the Open University's system and in some educational broadcasting initiatives. Open University students study through centrally produced materials and are able to consult local tutors and counsellors on any problems encountered in their studies. They can meet regularly in tutorial groups with other students studying the same course, and the Open University provides summer schools for intensive group tuition. The flexi-study system, devised by the National Extension College, and now offered through more than sixty local colleges and centres, offers the benefits of studying specially designed correspondence texts at home combined with face-to-face tuition. These combinations of distance learning and limited amounts of face-to-face tuition have been demonstrated to be highly effective, convenient and satisfying to the learners. They could well be developed more comprehensively for the continuing education of adults in the future. There are already some small schemes in which publicly maintained educational institutions offer assistance to those studying on their own, but these are limited in scale and operate very much in isolation.

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

8.21 Independent learning is not always primarily based on educational institutions, as the broadcasting organisations have demonstrated and as the following examples show. The public libraries can offer independent learners extremely useful facilities within which to undertake a course of directed study. A recent experiment in the United States[77] sought to develop the potential of public libraries as centres for independent learning by training a member of staff in each library in the techniques of directing study. Library users were free to approach this librarian about any matter they wanted to study and, with the librarian's help, they were able to construct their own individual study courses. For specialist help the librarian was able to put the learner in contact with experts who might be willing to help. Libraries and librarians are particularly well suited to this form of 'tuition' since they have ready and knowledgeable access to many information systems through which to help individual enquirers. This American experiment achieved some success and was received with considerable satisfaction by learners and librarians.

8.22 Self-help groups are another way in which adults can undertake education without direct contact with a teacher. The Scandinavian study circle movement is perhaps the best known example, providing for hundreds of thousands of people every year. In the Swedish system any group of adults wishing to pursue joint study can set themselves up as a study circle and qualify for assistance, through, for example, study materials prepared centrally and specifically for self-help groups. These study circles do not have to meet in an educational institution; they meet in private homes, in clubs, and at work places. Although study circles are often run without teachers to direct the study, support is readily available from local organisers, who help in setting up the circles and advise on their progress. The study circle system encourages adults to learn together autonomously in circumstances suited to their needs, interests and patterns of living. Its success in Sweden is due to the public education service's systematic educational and organisational input into what is essentially a voluntary movement. Self-help study groups are already well established in this country in, for example, the adult education work of the Women's Institutes and the Pre-School Playgroups Association. These groups can perform a particularly useful function in isolated places where student numbers are small and regular travel and attendance by visiting teachers may be difficult and expensive. It would be valuable for this form of study to be more widely exploited. For

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example the TUC and the CBI might encourage their constituents to experiment with this study circle approach, for which there is probably both the interest and facilities in many work places.

8.23 Centres for independent learning can also contribute to widening the range of educational opportunities for adults. Such centres have been set up in some large educational institutions, mainly for supplementary use by students registered on courses of face-to-face tuition. They usually have a variety of programmed learning materials and facilities for playing audio and video tapes. The independent study courses offered in this way are a logical step from the use of audio-visual materials by teachers in the classroom. Some are open to the public irrespective of whether they are registered as students of the institution, and staff advise enquirers on the most appropriate materials for study. But this public accessibility is still fairly uncommon, and it would be extremely valuable for more adults to be able to use these centres. Private study facilities are available, mostly in public libraries, but if expensive equipment is required to make the most of materials designed for individual study then this calls for some central co-ordination. It would be helpful to designate a major institution in each area, where a comprehensively equipped independent learning centre would be open to all, day and evening, with trained staff permanently available to help with the use of materials and to advise on study problems. These centres might eventually be a focus for the wider promotion of open learning in their areas and the basis for a national open learning network providing opportunities for either individual or group learning. Such centres could, for example, play an important role in the development of courses in the proposed 'Open Tech' programme. The use of the word 'centres' in this context of independent learning should not be confused with the proposals for networks of local continuing education centres discussed in chapter 7. Independent learning centres would have a relatively specific function, while the local centres would have a general function as the first line of contact with adult students. The growth of independent learning centres and self-help groups should encourage publicly maintained educational institutions to offer a more systematic and comprehensive service to adults, using learning materials produced centrally by other bodies.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DISTANCE LEARNING AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING

8.24 It might be argued that the development of open access

distance learning systems and of individualised learning based on centrally produced materials are simply ways of providing education on the cheap. The Council rejects this view. The costs depend on the degree of sophistication, the initial input to prepare the system, and the number of students participating over a period of time. In exceptional circumstances the costs may be high, but in general the Council believes that these systems provide an important *new* mode of learning, which can enable an increasing number of adults to study at reasonable cost to themselves and at low cost overall. More crucially, they open up opportunities to some people who simply cannot take advantage of conventional systems.

8.25 Recently there have been suggestions for an Open Polytechnic and for an 'Open Tech' programme,[78] although the ideas behind these titles are not necessarily aimed at the setting up of an actual institution. The Council certainly takes the view that these developments should be based on the formation of open learning resource centres and systems within and among existing institutions rather than in new institutions. The needs of the next twenty years will be so varied and so subject to change that flexibility will be paramount. At the same time the number of younger students in further education will fall and release spare capacity for adults wanting a wider variety of opportunities. The provision of high quality learning materials, which can be studied locally in the supporting environment of a college, is likely to be a creative solution for many people. This favours the development of open learning resource centres using flexi-study approaches with learning methods and materials adapted to local and individual requirements.

FUNCTIONS OF BROADCASTING IN OPEN LEARNING

8.26 There are at least five educational functions in broadcasting. The first may be termed educative rather than educational. Many of the general output programmes fall into this category, when their intention is broadly to educate rather than to inform or entertain. Closely allied is a second function where such programmes are broadcast in conjunction with specially produced books, which have often become best-sellers, to enable viewers and listeners to follow a series in more detail. This again may be regarded as broadly educative rather than more specifically educational. A third and increasingly important function is to act as a link to local educational opportunities. The classic example is the adult literacy campaign, where television programmes aimed at illiterate adults had some teaching content, although their primary aim was to encourage contact

with a local literacy tuition scheme. This linking role is not confined to education. The enormous numbers of people who have been helped into useful social and educational activity testify to the power of broadcasting to reach those who cannot be easily reached in any other way. There are also an increasing number of examples of linked initiatives between educational agencies and the BBC and ITV companies,[79] as well as links, for example, between the Open University and the Workers' Educational Association. A fourth and directly educational function is for broadcasting to provide material for use by teachers in face-to-face tuition. This has always been one of the main contributions of educational broadcasting and the special recording concessions secured for educational broadcasts have facilitated this.

8.27 The fifth function is concerned directly with open learning systems. Here radio and television programmes are one element in a complete learning package, which may be entirely produced by broadcasters, as, for example, the BBC's foreign language courses, or the broadcasters may co-operate with other producers to provide separate contributions to the package. These projects are planned from the outset to provide for systematic learning, each element being carefully chosen to make a distinct contribution to the total learning process.

8.28 Radio and television can have a profound effect on the education of adults because they can increase both the scope and the effectiveness of educational activity. Those who see no value for themselves in education can be encouraged through the educative and the linking functions of broadcasting to reconsider that judgement. Those who are unwilling or unable to enter face-to-face tuition can undertake systematic learning in their own homes. Broadcasts recorded in the home allow people to learn at their own pace and convenience. Broadcasts recorded by educational institutions can be used over a period of time, although the present copyright laws do seriously restrict the educational exploitation of recorded materials. Admittedly broadcasts can rarely substitute for the whole process of teaching, but they can add an extra dimension to teaching and enhance the effectiveness of learning. It is also important to note how much the broadcasters' work is enhanced when their activities are co-ordinated with local educational providers, both formal and informal, and other agencies.

8.29 The educative effect of broadcasting is widespread. There is great scope for building learning materials on general broad-

cast series — in drama, documentary and indeed almost any kind of broadcasting. Both the BBC and ITV companies have already collaborated with others to build educational opportunities on educative series. But the main developments in this field have been made overseas by educational institutions building courses and learning materials on British broadcast series. Valuable opportunities are being lost in Britain. Initiatives need to be taken by broadcasters and, more particularly, by other agencies to change this, but any real developments will require the commitment of resources by all the contributors — publishers, broadcasters, and educational institutions. The need for new legislation to clarify the copyright position is especially important. Regrettably the Government's current proposals do not appear to improve the situation as far as re-using general output for educational purposes is concerned.[80]

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND OPEN LEARNING

8.30 Broadcasting has already proved to be a highly effective element in distance learning. The main constraint on its use is lack of air time, particularly of 'prime' air time, as educational broadcasting competes with other programmes. This constraint is reduced when recording facilities are available to learners. Recorded tapes and discs already provide a useful weapon in the distance educator's armoury; the real breakthrough comes with the means of recording television programmes 'off air'. Videocassette recorders are already a common sight in educational institutions, and the new cheaper models now on sale will soon make them widely available for domestic use.

8.31 Videocassettes have preceded the development of videodiscs; like their audio counterparts, videocassettes can be purchased as pre-recorded or as blank tapes, while videodiscs contain only pre-recorded material. Videocassettes can record several hours of television at one time and, with a clock control, recording can be done automatically. This allows television transmissions of educational and training material at times when the transmitters are not otherwise in use, for example, during the night. Educational programmes broadcast at such times assume that institutions and individuals have facilities to record 'off air'. Consequently 'trailers' are needed in prime time to alert people to the broadcasts. If most educational programmes are eventually broadcast outside prime time, many of those who cannot record them are likely to miss them. The value of prime time for educational broadcasts was most successfully demonstrated in

the adult literacy campaign. The spread of recording facilities in the home should not therefore be used as a reason for removing educational broadcasts from the times in the day most convenient to viewers and listeners. The fourth television channel, which begins broadcasting in 1982, will clearly offer educational opportunities which must be exploited.

8.32 'Off air' recording with videocassettes again raises the perennial problem of copyright, but there is some evidence that pre-recorded videocassettes and videodiscs may be increasingly preferred for disseminating educational and other material. Although pre-recorded material does not readily allow teachers to influence its content, it can be used as a resource by using selected sequences or single frames. It may be the way in which much 'do-it-yourself' and leisure pursuit instruction will be commercially distributed. Broadcasters and others are already active in this field. Pre-recordings may be widely promoted as a means of conveying educational material to institutions and the home, particularly with the expected drop in the costs of the associated hardware.

8.33 The implications of video developments for learning, and especially distance learning, are enormous. Since these materials are likely to become increasingly used in continuing education, broadcasters will have to consider the appropriateness of their educational offerings in timing, scale, quality, relevance and support material. The providers of pre-recorded material may have to consider some monitoring of their output in relation to some prescribed minimum standards. Broadcasters know that their trade is changing rapidly. Production is becoming increasingly separated from distribution, so other 'publishers' will enter the educational media field. The resultant increase in choice and variety should be to the advantage of educational users.

8.34 'Videotex', now replacing the term 'viewdata', presents alphanumeric material on the television screen: Prestel is a large capacity directory of information relayed by British Telecom through the telephone network, while Ceefax (BBC) and Oracle (IBA) are essentially electronic newspapers ('teletext') provided through the television channels. The necessary receivers (specially equipped television sets) will soon become much cheaper and videotex will then become increasingly available Prestel has by far the largest capacity of the three systems; at present it offers 156,000 pages of information from over 140 main organisations. It will have some 'interactive' capability thus

improving its potential educational use over teletext, which contains less pages and at present acts only as a data bank, although experiments are underway with computer linked programmes. The significant fact remains that television is now rapidly developing its potential for education and training.

8.35 The educational use of these videotex data banks must be considered in relation to any continuing education system of the future. There will be an element of 'discovery learning' in their use, and courses could be designed around the constantly revised data, for example, stock market prices in economics courses. In its presentation of up-to-date information videotex could be used as an advertising 'notice board' for educational offerings by broadcasters and other providers; the BBC, the ITV companies, and the Council for Educational Technology are already developing this form of use. It would be valuable to devise ways of co-ordinating this kind of information, perhaps through one organisation responsible for making sure that accurate and accessible information is fed into the data banks.

8.36 Computer assisted learning at home requires a programmable micro-computer with a modified television set as a display unit. This equipment is becoming less expensive, but the computer programmes will probably remain quite highly priced to cover design costs. These costs will probably make this area of microtechnological advance of less immediate priority for educational purposes than video and videotex. This should give time to develop national policies for computer assisted learning, possibly in conjunction with policies for the educational output and use of video and videotex. Institutions will be equipped before homes, although complex home computers are already coming on the market and the current BBC micro-computer project couples the production of a relatively inexpensive micro-computer (for use with a television set) together with a large 'library' of programmes.

8.37 The use of micro-computers will enhance independent learning, and consequently the growth of distance learning and self-help groups. Programmes will need to be designed to meet certain prescribed educational standards. This might be done through a national body authorised to design and monitor programmes for educational purposes. There will probably be a fragmented educational market with, for example, some institutions ahead of others in the acquisition and development of equipment and programmes, which may be incompatible with equipment available in other institutions. There is thus a real

need for co-operation and co-ordination through consortia, or through a national body, to ensure the adequate development of computer assisted learning through compatible systems and to encourage the standardisation of equipment. This is where the Council for Educational Technology and the broadcasters, amongst others, can work together to the advantage of the users.

CONCLUSIONS ON OPEN LEARNING

8.38 The development of open access systems, including both distance and independent learning, could be one of the most important educational innovations over the next twenty years. There is already a good deal of experience which could be put to much wider and more effective use. While there must always be a place for face-to-face tuition, the need to develop a comprehensive system of continuing education calls for a new balance between face-to-face tuition and distance learning systems, and consequently for substantial changes in working practices in the public education sector. An educational service combining the best features of face-to-face tuition and open access distance learning will require an operational flexibility that is at present lacking. It calls into question, for example, the basis of many staffing practices, and it will require radical redefinitions of some teaching jobs. It also questions many of the current methods of allocating resources and staff to institutions on the basis of student hours and course levels. In particular it will require co-operation among many local and national bodies of a kind little in evidence at present. The broadcasting authorities have recognised the importance of co-operation and have set up arrangements to facilitate this for their educational activities, but there is as yet no effective mechanism whereby the independent providers of open learning and the public education sector can co-ordinate their work to ensure the comprehensive, systematic, and cost-effective development of provision for open access distance learning.

8.39 The Council therefore considers that the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office should encourage further experiments in open access distance learning systems, and in the assessment of their effectiveness. The Departments should give particular attention to: assisting public and private organisations to obtain adequate funds for the development of effective systems; setting standards of educational quality; advising on and determining standards of technical compatibility; and recommending an organisational framework to prom-

ote collaborative ventures among local, regional and national institutions.

8.40 In the Council's view all major establishments of further and higher education and large public libraries should provide resource centres open to independent learners as well as to registered students. Specialist staff would need to be appointed to ensure sufficient equipment is available for use by staff, students and independent learners, to develop and maintain teaching materials suitable for use in face-to-face tuition and by independent learners, to advise staff about suitable teaching materials, to acquire materials for use in face-to-face teaching and by independent learners, and to arrange for independent learners to receive tuition and advice. Advising, counselling and teaching independent learners should be a normal responsibility of teaching staff and this should be reflected in their contracts and terms and conditions of service.

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Chapter Nine
FINANCIAL PROVISION FOR INSTITUTIONS

9.1 The financial structure of a continuing education system is inevitably complex and needs to be looked at from three closely related perspectives: financial support for learners, financial support for institutions, and the connecting link of fee payments by students to institutions. Chapter 10 examines the first of these and concludes with a brief review of the criteria for assessing the whole and the separate parts of the structure of finance for continuing education. This chapter considers the other two perspectives, although any description of the present system of financing education and training in the public sector must rest on the shifting ground of current governmental reviews.

TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

9.2 At present there are twenty-three statutory industrial training boards and one statutory training committee answerable to, and financed by, the Manpower Services Commission; the statutory Agricultural Training Board, is answerable to, and financed by the Ministry of Agriculture. Local Government and the Merchant Navy have non-statutory training boards. Some other industries have non-statutory training committees, and most public sector industries are statutorily required to provide adequate training for their employees and to consult them about it. The boards, first established in 1964, are responsible for promoting adequate training by companies through a system of levy, grant, advice, and direct services. Originally they operated a levy-grant system to stimulate training and redistribute costs between those companies offering little or no training and those providing a lot. The levy ranged from under 1% to almost 4% of wages and salaries. In 1974 this system was fundamentally changed to a levy-exemption scheme for firms providing training at the level of the boards' defined standards. In 1977-78 the potential levy totalled £200 million, but exemptions reduced the actual amount received to less than half that figure. The government has very recently announced its plans to close sixteen of the boards in 1982-83, so as to seek to reinvigorate industrial training through voluntary initiatives. Critics of this decision have pointed out that it was the relative lack of success of voluntary arrangements in the 1950s and early 60s, which prompted the setting up of the statutory boards. The

seven boards which will survive are generally the larger ones, and it is estimated that they will still cover 30% of the workforce compared with the 50% coverage by all the present boards. But the surviving boards are to lose their public funding and will have to rely on support from their industrial sectors. The responsibility for organising and funding training is therefore shifting rapidly away from statutory to voluntary arrangements.

9.3 The Manpower Services Commission, set up in 1974 under the Employment and Training Act 1973, provides employment and training services. The Commission is separate from government but accountable to the Secretary of State for Employment and to the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales for its operations in those countries. The Commission is financed by an annual grant from the Treasury. Among its various activities it currently provides funds for the industrial training boards which, in addition to the boards' own grants to stimulate training in certain areas, are distributed to encourage training in certain vital skills (such as computer programming) and to counter the effects of recession on firms' training provision. The MSC also runs the Training Opportunities Scheme which, although primarily a scheme for awarding grants to unemployed people to retrain for new work, has in recent years led to the sponsorship of appropriate provision in the public education sector.

9.4 While it is not appropriate for the Council to make substantive proposals on the training provided by individual employers or under ITB auspices, or to propose new methods of financing industrial training, it is nevertheless concerned about training. Opportunities to improve vocational skills are of prime importance and industrial training is a vital element in any system of continuing education. The MSC has recently reviewed the organisation of industrial training in preparation for new legislation, and the Council responded with its views.[81] Whatever the effects of the Government's recently published plans for a further fundamental change in the basis of public funding for industrial training, the relationship between industry and the public education service will continue to present difficult problems of student and course sponsorship and free movement of employees-students between the two systems. These problems are likely to affect an increasing number of adults if the MSC's latest proposals[82] to widen the opportunities for adults to train and retrain are, as is to be hoped, carried through. But until the public education service is itself better equipped to meet the needs of adults, there seems to be no single way to

finance individual learners and institutions for both training and education.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

9.5 Central and local government are the main sources of finance for public educational institutions, with an annual public expenditure on education in 1981-82 of the order of £11,000 million, of which about a quarter is expended directly by central government through the national Education Departments – the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office — and the remainder by local education authorities.[83] This figure applies to the total expenditure on education, not simply to expenditure on institutions.

9.6 The Education Departments fund some educational institutions direct. In the university sector the Department of Education and Sciences determines an annual block grant which the University Grants Committee then allocates among the universities. The grant currently covers about 75% of the universities' expenditure and the remainder is made up largely from students' fees. The Education Departments directly meet a proportion of the expenditure of university extra-mural departments, the districts of the Workers' Educational Association, and the long-term residential colleges such as Ruskin College and Coleg Harlech. The local education authorities fund a substantial proportion of the expenditure on polytechnics, further education colleges, schools and adult education, although about 60% of the money spent by local authorities comes from central government through the rate support grant. These RSG funds are not earmarked, so that no local authority is obliged to allocate its expenditure in the proportions used to arrive at the original calculation for the total amount of RSG. Thus local authorities have some freedom in determining the proportion of expenditure allocated to education, and discretion in allocating expenditure within their education budgets.

9.7 There are two broad constraints on the level of local authorities' spending: the amount that can be raised from local sources, and the level at which central government sets the RSG together with the formula used to allocate it among individual authorities. A change in one affects the other. Thus when central government decides to reduce the proportion of RSG to local income or to put a ceiling on the total amount of RSG, local authorities are obliged to increase local taxation if they wish to maintain their expenditure levels.

9.8 Although the interplay of local taxation and RSG constrains their expenditure, local authorities have until recently been able to determine their own policies and budgets with an assurance that the greater part of their expenditure would be met from central funds. This has now changed to a far less open-ended system of financing under the provisions of the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, which introduced a new block grant system to replace the 'needs' and 'resources' elements of the previous RSG formula; the 'domestic' element is in effect retained in the form of domestic rate relief grant, but this accounts for only some 10% of the total. Central government now makes an annual assessment of each local authority's expenditure needs in respect of all its services, the so-called 'standard expenditure'. It also draws up a rate poundage schedule for each type of authority which indicates its assumed rate revenue contribution to possible levels of actual expenditure. Block grant, as its name suggests, is not earmarked for particular services, but is paid to each local authority to bridge the gap between its assumed rate revenue and its actual expenditure. When a local authority's actual expenditure begins to exceed its standard expenditure it has to find a progressively increasing proportion of its total expenditure from local rates revenue, as the 'marginal rate' of block grant decreases. An authority may be allowed some leeway in exceeding its standard expenditure before the sanction of reducing the proportion of block grant to rates revenue is applied, but when this threshold is passed the marginal decrease in the rate of block grant will accelerate to the point where an authority may attract no further block grant support and all additional expenditure has to be met from its own resources. This therefore, as the new Act intends, puts considerable pressure on authorities to budget at the level of central government assessment, and can be seen as shifting control away from the local authorities towards central government. At present, it is difficult to judge how great this shift will be, but the block grant system has been strongly criticised by the local authority associations and it has particularly concerned local education committees, whose budgets account for well over half of local authority expenditure.

9.9 In allocating resources for post-school education, local education authorities have also to take account of the requirements of the Burnham Further Education Salaries Document and of the Advanced Further Education Pools in England and in Wales. The Burnham Document sets out the scales, allowances and other provisions for determining the salaries of further educa-

tion teachers, the proportion of posts in the different lecturer grades, the grading of college departments, and the 'group' category of further education establishments. The categorisation of courses permits higher level courses to receive a more generous proportion of the more highly paid lecturer posts; and unit totals, which are worked out by course categorisation and by student hours, determine departmental grading and establishment grouping. This system can generate tension between educational policies encouraging open access and the need for authorities to keep within their post-school education budgets. Authorities expect their further education institutions to operate within an agreed staff establishment and budget and to accept students only if they have sufficient staff to provide for them. Any widening of open access arrangements would lead to increased student numbers with a consequent need for more staff, leaving authorities with little choice but to limit the intake of students. This obvious conflict between open access and expenditure on staffing is evident in any attempt to apply the 'Robbins principle' that all who qualify by age, ability and attainment should have the opportunity of entering higher education. When it was national policy to expand higher education, supported by an open-ended system of local authority financing with up to 60% of the costs derived from central funds, the Robbins principle was workable, but the economy cuts of recent years, reinforced by the new block grant, are inevitably restricting the freedom to expand even if the numbers qualifying for entry under the Robbins principle are growing.

9.10 All local education authorities contribute to the Advanced Further Education Pools to cover the costs of advanced courses in the public further education sector. Many, but not all, authorities maintain polytechnics and other institutions of higher eduction, which serve their own residents *and* form part of the national system of higher education, attracting students from all over the country. The Pools seek to ensure that the costs of these advanced courses do not fall solely on the authorities directly responsible for these establishments, by sharing the total cost of advanced courses through an agreed formula amongst all the authorities. Until recently the Pools were open-ended, but, with the expansion of advanced further education and the consequent increase in total costs, they have now been 'capped'. Instead of their total size being determined by the aggregate of actual expenditure, this is now predetermined by central government, and local authority claims are adjusted to fit the available total. Any gap between the Pools'

allocation and actual expenditure falls on the maintaining authority. This brings the financing of public sector higher education more into line with the university sector, where there is in effect a government determined block grant allocated by the University Grants Committee. The parallel between public sector higher education and the universities will shortly become even closer with the establishment in England of a National Advisory Board to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Science on policy and funding for public sector higher education. The arrangements to be made in Wales are currently being considered.

9.11 With these national policy movements from open-ended funding towards financial limits imposed by central government, similar local systems may possibly be adopted for non-advanced further education and adult education. Some local education authorities are now instituting net budgeting arrangements, which provide a fixed annual allocation to adult education centres for the centres to use largely as they consider appropriate. The costs of any provision made beyond this financial limit have to be met by the centres themselves.

9.12 It is not easy to foresee what effects these recent changes may have on post-school education and on the prospects for continuing education in particular. The chill atmosphere of public retrenchment is scarcely conducive to the provision of wider educational and training opportunities for adults, and it clearly could have considerable effects on the readiness of institutions to innovate and expand in new directions. The move towards national limits on expenditure may build psychological 'ceilings' over the aspirations of educators and trainers as well as financial ceilings over their budgets. Equally what may be seen in one sense as a curb on developments could in another sense provide a spur to doing things in new ways through different sources of funding. It is difficult to be sanguine about this, especially as the education and training sectors have become accustomed to relatively high levels of public funding and any reduction of those funds is bound to cause difficulties of adjustment both for the providers and the receivers. However, the Council believes that the introduction of financial limits and the move towards replacing some public expenditure by private investment, *need* not lead to any significant further restriction on the development of continuing education. Equally, there still remains plenty of scope for exploring alternative methods of funding education and training institutions.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS

9.13 Even before the recent changes in the financing of post-school education, doubts were expressed about the suitability of funding continuing education through a system designed for institutions providing primarily for the initial education of young adults. A number of proposals have been made in recent years for alternative ways of financing institutions catering for the continuing education of adults, and they all centre around the idea of some form of collective funding. The method of collection may vary — payroll tax, profits tax, insurance fund — but the common object is to collect from disparate sources funds which can then be distributed to achieve agreed priorities. One of the stated advantages of a collective fund is that it would enable the contributing organisations, which largely operate independently of one another and sometimes in competition, to pool their resources to serve the common interest. This obviously calls for consultative and planning mechanisms so that contributors can see that their individual as well as their common interests are in fact being served.

9.14 One proposal is for an excess profits tax to sustain a national fund for continuing education.[84] Above a certain level, profits could be taxed to operate a fund on a counter-cyclical principle, which would smooth out the uneven provision of training by redressing the natural tendency of firms to retrench on training in bad times, thus leaving themselves ill prepared for any economic recovery. The funds accumulated could be frozen until there was a downturn in the economy of an industry, when they would be released (and perhaps matched by central government contributions) to provide more general training. Whilst this proposal might smooth out the variations in the amount of industrial training provided over time and ensure a consistent level of training regardless of temporary economic changes, it is much less certain whether it could be used to provide regular finance for general education purposes, particularly of the sort outside the immediately perceived needs of industry.

9.15 A collective funding system, going beyond the levy-grant-exemption system of the industrial training boards, was proposed in 1976 by the Manpower Services Commission in *Training for Vital Skills*.[85] Here too, the object was to obtain a steadier flow of finance and a more stable provision for training by pooling the costs and thus reducing the unfair burden on those firms which train their own employees only to see them 'poached' by non-training firms. This proposal was favourably

received by many educators and trainers, but employers were much less welcoming, largely because of reservations about how the funds would be disbursed. The challenge of that question applies of course to any kind of collective funding. It still remains unclear whether the MSC's proposal could be extended beyond industrial training to include, for example, those areas where industry and the MSC currently sponsor the public education service to carry out training on their behalf.

9.16 Collective funding was advocated by some of the respondents to the Council's discussion paper, *Towards Continuing Education,* in connection with the present disparate funding from many central and local government departments, and other bodies, of a scattered range of activities all aimed at the education of the adult population. These respondents suggested a common fund, made up of these various bodies' contributions, to be disbursed amongst institutions in line with priorities agreed by national and local consultative bodies, made up of representatives of the funding bodies and the public education sector. It was argued that this would provide the required financial support for a co-ordinated and planned programme of development for continuing education. The likelihood of a collective fund of this sort being set up could only be examined by enquiry and discussion amongst the potential contributors. But even if this proposal proved unacceptable, it is a reminder that there are bodies allocating grants to education, which do not ever appear in the official education statistics. It also points to the need for consultative machinery to work out priorities, avoid unnecessary duplication, and develop collaborative schemes. A number of respondents were clear that it was the responsibility of central and local government to ensure, at their respective levels, the collaborative planning of continuing education.

9.17 Is it possible, or desirable, to establish a collective fund for continuing education? The activities and interests of all the bodies currently active in this field — the public education sector, industry and commerce, and the host of statutory and voluntary bodies engaged in education and training — are so diverse that it is far from easy to see how any one system for the financing and planning of provision could meet all of the many requirements. It might be more useful to consider a set of systems, loosely connected but each serving different purposes, some of which might be collectively funded. In effect of course this is the sort of system we have now, although it is not necessarily easily adaptable to the development of continuing

education. In particular, what the present set of systems lacks is the working connections among the component parts.

9.18 Any effective form of collective funding for continuing education has to ensure that the provision is adequately funded, as effective and efficient as possible, and open to the freest possible movement by students within it. There are therefore three propositions which, although not strictly financial, are crucial to the development of continuing education: that decisions about the funds allocated to the education and training of adults should be as important in policy making as the allocation of resources for the education of children; that there should be planning and consultative machinery to bring together all the providing bodies; and that the barriers to the free movement of adults amongst the various forms of provision should be lowered and, where possible, removed. The Council had been impressed by the way in which collective funding has been developed and worked in Sweden and France, and considers that further studies of its applicability to this country would be worthwhile.

9.19 It remains important to note that the idea of a collective fund for continuing education, at least in certain forms, would have to overcome the traditional aversion in British public finance to hypothecated revenues. That is to say that the collection of public taxes in Britain is firmly based on the principle that no part of the tax fund is raised specifically for previously assigned, or hypothecated, purposes. Public taxation can only be raised and disbursed by authority of Parliament, which does not specify that any particular tax should or must be used for any specific purposes. Thus it would certainly be unorthodox, and perhaps even unconstitutional in the unwritten sense, to link the revenues of any particular taxation arrangement to the specific funding of continuing education. It may be that some such example as the National Insurance Fund, under which employers and employees pay prescribed contributions for the sole purpose of receiving specified benefits within specific regulations, might be followed in the setting up of a 'continuing education fund. A statutorily constituted board could then disburse the funds of the trust in accordance with predefined regulations to achieve agreed educational purposes. This might be an innovation in the public finance of education, but it would not be so far removed from the 'whisky money' raised under the Local Taxation Act of 1890, which allocated part of a new tax on spirits to educational purposes within the provisions of the Technical Instruction Act of the preceding year. It may be mixing

metaphors, or drinks, to acknowledge that the revenue was 'small beer' in comparison with the size of funding required nearly a century later for continuing education, but it did assist the growth of public technical education, and what is now needed is special assistance in the growth of continuing education.

FEES

9.20 Students' fee payments link the arrangements for financing learners to the systems of financing institutions. Policy decisions on fee charges can affect the freedom of adults to demand, and of institutions to supply, educational opportunities. Those decisions are also closely affected by the principle to be applied in relating the actual costs of providing continuing education to the contribution to be raised in fees paid by the users; what might be termed the relationship of continuing education as a 'public good' to continuing education as a 'private good'. There was no unanimity about this amongst the respondents to the Council's discussion paper. An analysis of their replies revealed the four separate approaches considered below, each of which would have different effects on the demand for, and supply of, education and training, and on the systems for financing learners and institutions.

9.21 *Education should be free at the point of take-up.* This view is based on grounds of principle and practicality, in that education is a public good which should be provided free in the same way as health care. The practical arguments for free education are that the poor and the under-educated have to be attracted into education, and that they must not be discouraged from re-entry because of lack of money, or be unwilling to do so because, accustomed to free education for the young, they expect it to be free for adults. Therefore the argument goes that the only practical strategy is to offer free education to all adults, otherwise provision will remain restricted to those who can afford it and those who appreciate its value sufficiently to be willing to pay for it.

9.22 *Fees should be charged to meet some part of the cost of provision.* The view that education should be free to adults, though strongly held by some respondents, was not widely supported. It was of course suggested that the introduction of free education for adults would at present be widely regarded as politically unacceptable. The view that education for adults should contain some element of payment by the users is based on principle as well as practicality. It accepts that education is a

social good, which should be promoted through public funds, but argues that it is also an individual good. Since there is no compulsion on adults to continue their education, they do so in pursuit of their individual interests and obtain individual benefits. Therefore there should be some element of payment by the beneficiaries. There are also good practical reasons for introducing this element of payment. The provision of free education could stimulate heavy and expensive demands, and some part of these costs could be recovered through a fee element. Insofar as we appreciate what we pay for, some fee payment would oblige adults to consider the value of education to themselves in comparison with other goods, and would deter those not seriously interested in benefiting from education.

9.23 But at what level should the element of payment be set? One general principle might be that fees should not be set at a level which discourages any genuine applicant. This, it could be argued, is the case for much of the education open to adults at present. The main deterrent may not be so much the overall cost, but the way in which fees are collected. Few people on a weekly income could meet a single fee demand of say £60. If, however, they were asked to pay in instalments, the payments would be at a level which many on even very limited incomes would be willing and able to pay. For those genuinely unable to pay, there could be arrangements for fees to be reduced or waived. Another general principle for the allocation of costs might be that the payment borne by individuals should cover the direct teaching costs, while the public authorities should meet the remaining costs.

9.24 *Fees should be charged to meet the full costs of provision.* This proposition argues that while education is a public good, it primarily benefits those who undertake it, and those who do not want that benefit should not be expected to support through taxation something that only benefits others. If this is accepted, public education institutions could operate on the same basis as independent educational bodies, receiving their income from their users' fees or through sponsorship from those organisations for whom they are providing courses. One example is 'post-experience' education[86] where the costs of high level and usually vocational up-dating courses are frequently covered by correspondingly high levels of students' fees. Sponsorship, from industry or trades unions or professional bodies, might be channelled direct to the providing institutions to cover all or part of their costs, or it might be routed through students'

fees being paid on their behalf by their employer or some other organisation.

9.25 This 'free-market' approach to education can be advanced as attuning educational providers to the demands of their 'customers'. Institutions either provide what is required or they go out of business. But advocates of this proposal accept that both pragmatism and principle require two modifications to this approach. First, full cost fees will generally mean very high fees,[87] which may seriously limit the number of people able to pay for, and benefit from, educational provision. Since this is undesirable in the public interest, the public authorities would need to make partial or full grants available to those unable to pay the full fee. Second, in view of the high turnover in independent educational establishments,[88] it would be in the public interest to maintain continuity of provision through subsidies to educational institutions, so that their continued existence is not entirely dependent on foreseeing the fluctuating demands of the market. Much educational provision for adults is already funded in this way, notably in higher education, through large public subsidies for institutions and grants awarded to students; those who do not receive these grants pay for the full cost of their education less the public institutional subsidy element. The currently limited opportunities for adults are therefore not so much the effect of high fees (which are of no consequence to those receiving full grants), but rather of the restrictions of the grant system to certain categories of persons and courses. Thus the advocates of continuing education through a 'free market' sometimes support their case with the demand for a far more comprehensive system of financial support for learners.

9.26 *Fees should be charged according to a multiple pricing policy.* This pragmatic approach advocates that the users should pay the full costs of some forms of education, part of the costs for others, and that some forms of education should be provided free. It also selects some types of people as eligible for financial support and not others. Whilst a case can be made for distinguishing different types of education and different types of users, the difficulty with this approach is that every decision would have to be carefully made and justified to avoid the maze of conflicting arrangements which could so easily develop. This danger is evident in the responses to *Towards Continuing Education* where contradictory judgements on appropriate fee levels were expressed. A strong case can, for example, be made for user bodies such as the Manpower Services Commission, industrial firms, professional associations, and others for

whom the public education service is acting as agent, to pay the full cost of provision, but it is not so clear for other forms of vocational education and training. It could be argued that the direct beneficiaries of the vocational education presently provided by the public education sector are industry and the trainees and students; they therefore should bear most of the costs. The counter-argument is that an adequate supply of skilled manpower is so important that the encouragement of training and education requires fees to be kept low as an incentive. There are similarly two lines of argument about fee policies in adult general education. Either it is primarily an individual private good pursued for its own interest and benefit and, like other leisure time pursuits, it should be paid for in the same way as any other individual good; or that its free or cheap provision is extremely important since it is the form of education most relevant to most adults, and in particular, that education at the level expected to be achieved at school should be free, because every inducement should be given to the large number of adults whose general standard of educational attainment is low. Sometimes these views are combined: adult educators should be free to charge what the market will bear for 'popular' courses, in order to use the surplus income to subsidise more 'serious' provision.

9.27 The multiple pricing approach is, of course, used generally throughout this country to relate fee levels to types of students and types of courses. But there is no discernible agreement implicit in this approach; hence it can scarcely be dignified as any kind of national *policy* about multiple pricing in continuing education. This is in contrast to virtually all *initial* education, where the policy that primary and secondary schooling should be free is carried through to similar provision in further education as an assumption that all *full-time* study should be effectively free to young students. That policy assumption is missing in continuing education where, as McIntosh has shown in Figure 7, there are at least six different payment strategies being applied.[89] This variety of systems certainly demonstrates flexibility, but it may also hide inequalities in opportunity. It clearly contains no implicit agreement about whether some types of education should be paid for by individuals and some from public funds. It represents a mixed economy which has grown without any guiding principles to govern its fee policies.

9.28 The Council accepts that the maintenance of a multiple pricing approach is the only practicable course at present, but considers that much more attention should be paid to establishing

FIGURE 7. PAYMENT SYSTEMS IN CONTINUING EDUCATION

Payment systems	*Examples of areas of application and comments*
1. *Free* to user, paid entirely by *community*	All education while at school and much of further education.
	Effectively true for areas covered by mandatory grants e.g. undergraduate degrees.
	Some adult literacy provision.
2. Users should pay *some proportion* of costs	Current practice in bulk of general adult education.
	Open University.
3. Users should pay for some *types of courses* and not others	MSC provides some types of courses free, but not others.
	Local authorities expect to subsidise some areas of adult education, but others must be self-financing.
4. Users should pay for some *methods of study* and not others	'A' levels can be studied free or at low cost through further education colleges. People who need to study by correspondence or distance learning have to pay full-cost.
	Degrees studied full-time are covered by mandatory grant. The same degree studied part-time is not.
	It is cheaper to do a part-time degree through a polytechnic than through the Open University.
5. Some *types* of people should pay, but not others.	Some courses are free for the young, but not the adult student.
	Some are free for the unemployed, but not for those in work.
	Some are free for those who are clever enough to be selected for entry.
	Overseas students should pay, but not home students.
6. Users should pay the *full* cost.	Language schools.
	Correspondence colleges.
	Secretarial colleges.
	University of Buckingham.
	Some professional up-dating.

Source: McIntosh N. E. *Demand and Supply in the Education of Adults* (1981)

principles about who should pay for what at what, if any, proportion of the costs of provision. From these principles it should be possible to build up a general policy on fees. In the Council's view those principles might begin to be derived from the following broad categories of provision. Basic education skills and post-basic education in preparation for further study — no fees, on the grounds that this should be the minimum level of attainment obtainable in the free secondary school system. Retraining for new skills and jobs — low or no fees, on the grounds that employers have shown that they cannot provide all the financial resources required and that they cannot anyway be expected to pay for non-employed people, many of whom particularly need this kind of provision and cannot afford high fees; the community should bear much of this cost, which it otherwise has to meet as the costs of unemployment. Personal development and enrichment — some element of fee contribution, on the grounds that the individual student benefits as well as the community. Up-dating of knowledge and skills — at or approaching full cost fees, on the grounds that the individual student or employer gains most of the benefit. Distinctions drawn in this very broad way cannot, of course, distinguish between individual people or courses. Thus there need to be some further criteria such as, for example, that most employer sponsored vocational education should not be subsidised from public education funds, and that individually enrolled students should not normally be charged at full cost, since this would deter many people from entering those forms of education for which supporting grants are not available.[90]

9.29 The next chapter considers financial support for students, which is clearly very closely connected with the applicability of fees and the fee levels to be charged. In compiling the present chapter, the Council has regarded fees as a link between the financing of institutions and financial support for students. In fact of course these three perspectives on financing continuing education — institutions, fees, students — are so closely inter-connected that any separate discussion of them can only cover one part of the issues involved, and this inevitably leaves some untidy loose ends. Having already commented on future policies for fee charges, the Council considers that, in respect of the direct public funding of educational and training institutions, the present arrangements are not adequate to cope with continuing education needs in the future. These arrangements should therefore be thoroughly revised with the object of encouraging the development of continuing education and training.

Chapter Ten
FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

10.1 Lack of adequate financial means continues to be a major barrier to adults' access to education, as chapter 4 showed. There is general agreement in the Council that educational opportunities beyond the age of compulsory schooling should be open to all without undue financial hardship. This view is not novel. It is already accepted that large numbers of young people should be free to extend their schooling beyond the minimum school leaving age into full or part-time further and higher education without financial hindrance. Some members of the Council hold to the principle that continuing education should be free to adults in the same way as initial education is free to children, and that the abolition of fees would achieve considerable savings in administrative costs; but they recognise that this is not economically or politically practicable in the near future. However, the majority of Council members consider it neither practical, nor indeed necessary, to make continuing education free to those adults who have sufficient income to pay. The urgent question is whether the present methods of financing learners will remain appropriate to changing economic and social priorities, and will sufficiently enable the wider access of adults to education over the next twenty years.

10.2 Various proposals have been made for changing the methods of financial support for learners to permit their wider participation. Some groups have called for radical changes in both the financing and the administration of industrial training and the public education sector. There could however be considerable difficulties in introducing any radically new method of financing, which would require both detailed preparatory evaluation and time thereafter to set up the administrative system to operate it. To wait for a new method to come into operation risks losing opportunities in the meantime for increasing adult participation in education. It is therefore important to explore how the present system might be modified in the short term in order to start to move towards a comprehensive system of continuing education. It is helpful to start by describing the main elements of the present system before going on to suggest changes in it. The present system does after all enable a substantial number of adults to re-enter education without financial hardship.

THE PRESENT SYSTEM

Mandatory grants

10.3 The mandatory grant system is the main mechanism for providing financial support to students in higher education. In the public education sector the majority of students qualify, in effect as of right, for financial support during their studies, provided certain conditions are met. The first condition is that the learner is attending or proposes to attend a designated course. Designated courses are, generally, certain full-time or sandwich courses, provided by universities or establishments of further education maintained or assisted by recurrent grants out of public funds, namely for first degrees, diplomas in higher education, higher national diplomas, Technician Education Council higher diplomas, Business Education Council higher national diplomas and initial teacher training. Certain other full-time and sandwich courses comparable to first degree courses are also designated for mandatory grants; they may be either courses of at least three years duration provided by a university for a certificate or a diploma or other courses prescribed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science for this purpose. The only designated part-time courses are initial teacher training courses prescribed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science; mandatory grants are otherwise limited to long full-time and sandwich courses. Other conditions attaching to these grants concern: ordinary residence in 'the British Islands', good conduct, timely application for grant, and undertakings to repay excess grant. In addition students who have previously attended a designated course for more than one term, or one of certain other courses of further education (whether with a grant or not), are not normally eligible for a full mandatory award.

10.4 Mandatory grants are intended to provide students with a modest though sufficient income to cover both maintenance and study costs, so that they are able to study without the need to work to support themselves. The grant covers study costs, such as course fees, and contains an element to cover the costs of equipment, such as text books. The size of maintenance grants depends on personal circumstances. Levels of support differ for those living at home with their parents, for those studying in London or temporarily in high-cost countries abroad, and for those with dependents. For those over twenty-six years of age, provided they have been in full-time employment for three of the six years before the course, there is an older students' allowance. This recognises the acquired com-

mitments and the mode of living which make it difficult to return to the level at which younger students can often live.

10.5 Problems associated with mandatory grants are: keeping pace with inflation; adequacy of maintenance allowances for students living in their parents' homes; ability and preparedness of some parents to meet the contribution expected of them; women students marrying during their course; and the criteria for judging students' independent status. These are real problems but they should not obscure the achievements of the mandatory grant system. Although the system was mainly designed for the 18 to 22 age group, mandatory grants (and the various awards parallel or complementary to them) are available to any adult who fulfils the required conditions for entry to the designated courses.

Adult Education State Bursaries

10.6 Under the adult education state bursary scheme students accepted for places on the one or two year full-time courses at long-term adult residential colleges receive grant comparable to those under the mandatory grant scheme. These bursaries differ in one important respect. Under the mandatory grant scheme attendance at designated courses disqualifies students from subsequent mandatory awards, and attendance at certain other courses reduces subsequent entitlement. This does not apply to residential college courses, which are equivalent to the non-advanced FE courses taken by younger students to gain higher education entrance qualifications: these similarly do not, in the main, affect later entitlement to mandatory grants. The number of students receiving these bursaries is very small in comparison with those receiving mandatory grants.

Discretionary Grants

10.7 Discretionary grants are paid entirely from local education authority funds, unlike mandatory grants which local education authorities award in effect as administrative agents for central government funds, since central government provides most of the funding. As the name implies local education authorities have discretion in awarding these grants. However, authorities are generally willing to consider making discretionary grants to persons, beyond the minimum school leaving age, wishing to study at public or recognised efficient independent educational establishments which do not attract mandatory grants. There are two broad categories of discretionary grants. For younger students on non-advanced courses the local authority associations recommend that grants should leave the students on the

same footing as if they had stayed on at school. Thus tuition fees, a book allowance, and perhaps a contribution to travel expenses, may be paid, but a maintenance allowance is unlikely. For older students and those on advanced courses the associations recommend that discretionary grants should be made at the same level as mandatory grants. Discretionary grants are mostly awarded to those undertaking full-time education not covered by the mandatory arrangements, although discretionary grants are not meant to be restricted to full-time students; for example, some authorities, unfortunately now a declining number, award grants to part-time students of the Open University.

10.8 Educational maintenance allowances may be available to parents of students staying on at school beyond the minimum age. These are discretionary grants parallel, but at a lower level, to those in non-advanced further education. Attempts to introduce them more widely have so far failed, and since, like other awards, they are means-tested, many of those actually staying on at school do not in practice receive any allowance because they can be fully supported by their parents.

10.9 The discretionary grants system preserves the autonomy of local authorities to determine the level and extent of the allocation of their funds for the financing of learners. This can however lead to some anomalies. Different authorities may offer different levels of support for the same course. At times when local authorities are looking for financial savings, discretionary grants are an obvious target, and some authorities have currently stopped awarding some discretionary grants.

Paid release and educational leave

10.10 The present extent and provision of paid release from work has already been described in chapter 3. All that need be repeated here is the reminder that in Britain paid release from work is almost exclusively available only for vocational purposes at the discretion of employers, apart from a small statutory provision for the training of trade union representatives, and is largely confined to young, male, supervisory, technical, professional and managerial staff.[91] The present provision therefore falls far short of the wider concept of paid educational leave as set out in Convention 140 of the International Labour Office, covering the right of individual employees to 'general, social and civic education' as well as training at any level and trade union education. The present trend, most clearly seen in the professions, is away from the establishment of individual

employees' rights to education and towards the creation of obligations. Some professions have already introduced regulations obliging qualified members to continue their education regularly, and this type of obligation may soon begin to extend to other occupations. There are relatively few opportunities beyond these limits for individual employees to pursue the education of their choice with financial support.

Training Opportunities Scheme

10.11 The Training Opportunities Scheme (TOPS) has also been described in chapter 3 and all that need be noted here are the financial arrangements for the trainees. The level of grant payable on a TOPS course is basically calculated to be about 25% higher than the unemployment benefit to which the trainees would otherwise be entitled. It includes national insurance contributions as well as the cost of maintaining a second home, where trainees are required to live away from home. All travel costs and course fees are paid as well as any costs arising from study. An allowance is paid for mid-day meals. TOPS is, however, limited to full-time programmes.

Conclusion

10.12 There are a number of different opportunities provided by the existing system through which adult learners may find some support for their studies. This financial support has been invaluable to many adults who would otherwise have been prevented from returning to study, but it is hedged about by different regulations and available to different types of people or for different types of courses. There is no clear logic in these differences nor any understandable educational policy lying behind them. There appears to be a strong case for harmonisation of the various schemes of financial support for students. The TOPS principle that those engaged in full-time study should be somewhat more favourably treated than unemployed persons on social security offers a sensible incentive and is not unduly costly in relation to the level of unemployment benefit which would otherwise be a charge on public expenditure. However part-time students should not be at a financial disadvantage compared with full-time students. One possibility suggested is that they might be given an equivalent incentive in the form of income tax relief on the additional expenditure incurred in undertaking their studies and any relevant maintenance costs. Additionally there seems no good reason for the social security rules to be constructed so as to prevent unemployed people wishing to study part-time from doing so. Later in

this chapter ways in which the current system might be improved are discussed.

10.13 The current system for financing learners may not prove in the long term to be a suitable means of enabling anyone at any time in their life to receive the education appropriate to their needs. Opportunities for job-related education could still be largely determined by employers or by contractual obligations. Opportunities for retraining could still be mainly dependent on the public authorities' analysis of labour market needs. Opportunities for adult general education are likely to depend largely on the priorities set by the education authorities in designating courses for grant aid and for paid educational leave. Moreover, with the exception of basic education, most of the opportunities provided through grant aid could still be for courses leading to formal qualifications. Financial aid for equally important forms of adult general or vocational education that do not lead to qualifications could remain far less common. It is probable that this pattern of opportunities will not go far enough to break away from the traditional pattern in which the level of previous educational experience determines very strongly the opportunities available later in life.

AN EDUCATIONAL ENTITLEMENT FOR ADULTS

The idea of an educational entitlement

10.14 The recent growth in many countries of the view that a radical change is needed to develop the provision of educational opportunities after compulsory schooling has crystallised around the idea of an educational entitlement for adults. The idea itself is simple. After completion of compulsory schooling all adults would be entitled to a further amount of education throughout their lives and they could choose whether or not to take up this entitlement, how to use it and when. Those who wanted to extend their education directly after compulsory schooling would be able to do so, while those who had left formal education, perhaps at the minimum age, would be able to return without finding, as often happens now, that the opportunities they want are not available to them as adults.

10.15 This idea of an entitlement to continuing education is gaining ground in Britain.[92] There have been various suggestions about all adults having an entitlement to a number of years of study, from periods ranging from four years (roughly equal to the conventional further and high education span currently available to 16 and 21-year-olds) to eleven years (the adult's counterpart to the compulsory education span for children).

Inevitably such suggestions raise detailed questions. Does 'a year' mean any course lasting one academic year regardless of whether it is full-time or part-time? Does it include financial support for the period of study only or for the full year? Is part-time study to be counted as a proportional equivalent of full-time study and, if so, at what rate? Should this proportion also take account of the much higher level of financial support that full-time study can require? All these questions, and there are others, suggest that the idea will need detailed further study before it is possible to consider its practical implementation.

10.16 Nevertheless, the possibility of creating a system of educational entitlement for adults merits close examination. One major advantage of an entitlement is that it could be expected to change substantially the adult population's attitudes towards education: the possession of an entitlement would encourage positive decisions about its use. The word 'voucher' might be less helpful in this context, since it has become more closely associated with the arguments for a 'free-market' in the education of children. It could be more important to stress the fact that people have a valuable 'good', which they are able to accumulate and use in a variety of ways.

The main features of educational entitlements

10.17 Some entitlement to post-school education is, of course, already taken for granted in this country. In broad terms an educational entitlement can be defined as a measure which enables people to have unhindered access to a certain amount of education. It is worth looking at the main forms of entitlement which already exist.

- There is a general entitlement to education for those who choose to continue at school after sixteen or to transfer to an equivalent course at a college. With a few exceptions this is provided free or at low cost, and for those young people whose parents are unable to support them, discretionary maintenance grants may be available.
- Young people, who have left school for work where vocational education is provided, are entitled to access to part-time education. Tuition costs are low and most employers allow these employees to attend college and receive their wage or salary without deductions. This entitlement is in practice more freely available to young men than to young women.
- The 'Robbins principle' has entitled all who qualify by 'age, ability and attainment' to pursue a three year or longer full-time course of higher education. The object has been to ensure that

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this education can be obtained free, with tuition and maintenance costs paid through a mandatory grant whose level is adjusted according to the ability of the young students' parents to make a financial contribution. This principle also applies to adults, although in practice the number of mature students has been relatively small, in part because adults encounter various other barriers to access not met by the young.

- The Training Opportunities Scheme entitles unemployed adults, subject to certain qualifications, to pursue a course of up to one year's duration in order to retrain for a new job. A maintenance grant is payable during the course, and tuition costs are fully covered.

10.18 Even though TOPS at its peak provided for about 100 thousand adults a year, all these main examples of entitlements for education beyond the compulsory schooling age confer most of their benefits on adolescent adults. The older you are the less likely you are to be able to enjoy these benefits. One of the main objects of an educational entitlement for *adults* would be to ensure that entitlements such as these would not in practice be forfeit by reason of age, or sex, or specific disadvantaged group, but could be received in full or in part at any time of life by everybody.

10.19 Not all existing entitlements cover the same features of provision, and some are limited to specific people or specific courses. In many countries, the movement towards an entitlement system has come as part of a movement to what is known as paid educational leave. It is helpful to analyse the features common to the existing entitlements in this country and to the different approaches to paid educational leave now being developed in other European countries. These include:

- Provision of free (or low cost) tuition.
- Financial support for the associated costs of study.
- Maintenance support for student (and family).
- Educational right of access (for example, open entry, or the Swedish 25/4 scheme, or adequate preparatory study arrangements).
- Right to leave from work (either full or part-time) and right to return to work afterwards.
- Choice of study opportunities (ie. content).
- Choice of different modes of tuition.

Figure 8 offers a classification of the present main forms of entitlement in this country in terms of these features and

FIGURE 8. SYNOPSIS OF VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL ENTITLEMENTS

	England and Wales				Sweden	Italy	France	Belgium	Germany
Features	Post-16 school level courses	Part-time day release	Mandatory grants	Training Opportunities Scheme	'25/4' scheme	'150 Hours' scheme	Laws of 1971 and 1978	Paid educational leave	Paid educational leave as in Hamburg
Free or low cost tuition	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Financial support for study	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Maintenance support for student and family			X	X		X	X	X	X
Educational right of access	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Right to leave work and right to return	N/A	X		N/A		X	X	X	X
Choice of content	X		X	Limited	X		X	X	X
Choice of mode of study							X	X	
Limitations									
Categories of students	16-18 year olds	16-21 in employment	Those accepted by institutions	Unemployed	25 years old with 4 years in employment	Those in employment without school leaving qualifications	Employed	Employed and already enrolled at least 1 year on a part-time course	Employed
Course content		Vocational		Vocational	Mainly arts and social sciences		Mainly non-certificatable vocationally related courses		Approved general and vocationally related courses
Level of course			Degree or AFE		Degree level	Basic education			
Duration	Usually up to 2 years full-time	Up to 5 years part-time	3 years + full-time	Up to 1 year at a time	To completion of degree	150 hours	Approx. 1 day per month, accumulated	To completion of course	2weeks per year

compared with some European models. While no entitlement system should necessarily include all these features for all adults for all courses over a whole lifetime, the chart does provide an outline sketch of a number of the available options showing their variety and flexibility. It also indicates ways in which the various schemes are limited: sometimes to particular types of people and sometimes to particular types of courses. The possibility of limitation is an extremely important one as it allows any country to determine its own priorities either for student groups or for content, and therefore to control the rate of development and the cost of any such programme.

10.20 Any entitlement system should be designed to provide easy access to as many educational opportunities as possible. Some barriers to access are more significant to some groups in the population than others: the barriers may be attitudinal, financial, educational, geographical, domestic, or inherent in the nature of the provision. The first task is to decide on the essential features of an entitlement system appropriate to this country; the second task is to make the system workable. Five features which are likely to be among the most important are:

Tuition: Tuition is free at school and for immediately post-school courses, full or part-time. It is also effectively free, through grants, for most full-time students at first degree level. It can be argued that tuition should also be free for part-time degree courses, since part-time students cost the country much less. Some would argue that all tuition should be free, while others would limit free tuition to certain types or levels of courses. Whether or not such limitations are accepted, there seems no reason why this question should be tied to methods of study, as they now are.

Financial support for costs involved in studying. Many courses which require students to incur additional expense in order to follow them, for example on books, equipment or travel, can cause hardship. This is true for full and part-time courses at a variety of levels.

Life support for student (and family). If adults are to be able to study *full-time*, whether for three months or for three years, it is necessary to provide financial support nearer the level of a working wage than that of a student grant. This need is due to the particular demands of full-time study, rather than the content of the course. The level of financial support should be related to the students' family and life circumstances.

Educational access. The entry qualifications typically required of the young are frequently inappropriate for mature students. Some alternative access routes already exist, but they are not uniformly available, not widely known, and not always eligible for financial support. The Council, in responding to *Higher Education into the 1990s*, argued that higher education should be accessible to all, and that *artificial* educational barriers should not be placed in the way.[93] This calls for a wide range of different preparatory routes to be available together with adequate financial support for people to be able to pursue them, a need that was discussed in chapter 6.

Release from work. Employees wanting to study full-time need leave from work without endangering their continued employment, superannuation and other benefits. Alternatively many might prefer to study part-time if they could obtain some limited release from work for it — in effect the adult equivalent of the present day and block release arrangements for young people.

This analysis looks at provision from the demand side and not from the supply side. There are of course a range of different costs which vary according to the nature of provision and the range of the input, the learners. The range of outcomes, and therefore benefits, will similarly be varied. People's behaviour as evidenced by their take-up of opportunities will vary according to the costs they bear.

What an entitlement might cover

10.21 What types of education should an entitlement cover and what quantity of entitlement should be available? To take an extreme example, there are a few highly specialised professions, such as medicine, which require long periods of study. Doctors have to qualify for entry into initial training (usually through two additional years at school beyond the age of sixteen), they spend perhaps twice as long as most others in higher education, and they require regular periods of updating throughout their career. To argue from this that everyone should be entitled to a similar quantity of education throughout their lives, ignores the differences in educational needs and is likely to waste scarce resources.

10.22 One possible answer is for an entitlement to cover only certificate and post-experience courses, with other courses being paid for by students. Basic education could be an exception since it is the minimum level of attainment which should have been available through normal schooling. This

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option would take account of different educational and professional needs, since those people, such as doctors, who need very long periods of education, would receive a large entitlement. However, many important forms of education which do not lead to qualifications would be excluded, for example, health education, parent education and many other forms of social education which enable people to carry out important social and life roles more competently. The singling out of certain courses for priority in this way would not necessarily reflect individually perceived educational needs; some might want to take a vocational course without any intention to practice that vocation, and others might take a more general course which would nevertheless improve their vocational competence. To distinguish the eligibility of courses for an entitlement according to their content, is to ignore the purposes for which people are studying. The counter argument is that it would be more equitable to give everybody the same basic ration which they could use for any type of education; a limited ration would encourage people to clarify their needs and use their entitlement purposefully and carefully. Any allocation of a larger ration, where there is a clear need for it, would be an exception to the general rule that everybody should enjoy the same entitlement and use it to meet their own best interests. Neither of these options imply unlimited demand or unlimited supply with a responsive system at the beck and call of everyone. Nor is it likely that all people would wish to take any entitlement they were offered. It would be necessary to manage demand within generally agreed limits of what the country could afford and judged desirable.

10.23 The question of what an entitlement should cover is extremely difficult to resolve in the abstract. Rather than seeking a system covering all foreseeable needs, it would be more useful to consider what levels of education an entitlement might cover. These could include:

- Basic education.
- The equivalent of the two years' full-time education taken by some adolescents immediately after the completion of compulsory schooling.
- The equivalent of the typical three-year full-time first degree or professional qualification.
- A continuing 'lighter weight' entitlement to a wide variety of other courses, many of which might be non-certificatable.

10.24 This suggests a two tier system of entitlement. The first tier

might consist of a one-off entitlement to a given number of years of full-time study or its equivalent. This would normally entitle people to follow all the courses designated for grant aid by the public education authorities (from basic to postgraduate level), all the part-time and full-time courses of vocational education leading to qualifications, and perhaps all TOPS courses. Those who complete their post-school education without a break in youth would thereby have spent most or all of their first tier entitlement. The advantage would accrue to those who leave or have left initial education early, since they would have an intact entitlement for later use. The second tier might consist of a 'lighter' set of credit units which would be accumulated throughout life, perhaps at the rate of one week's entitlement for every year beyond the minimum school leaving age. This entitlement could be used for any form of education, either year by year or accumulated for a longer period of study. It would offer everyone continued access to educational opportunities on a more limited basis irrespective of whether they were willing or able to avail themselves of the more concentrated and lengthy periods of formal education in the first tier.

Methods of financing

10.25 It is necessary to consider whether such an entitlement system should be limited only to certain educational providers (for example the public maintained and aided education sector), or whether people should be free to use their entitlement on any form of education provided by any institution, public or private? It would obviously be advantageous for individuals to be able to use their entitlement freely, but this would require some unified system of financing to allow funds to flow between industry and the public, private and voluntary sectors in ways which their present independent financial structures may not permit.

10.26 It may therefore be necessary to have a new system of financing for any wide ranging provision of educational entitlement, but this would affect various interests — government, industry, educational providers, and adult students — which it could be difficult to reconcile. Government needs to be able to control the overall level of its expenditure on education and to know the financial implications of any new policy it may wish to implement. Industry needs to adjust the level of its expenditure to fluctuations in the economic climate, and generally promote those forms of education and training of direct concern to its own performance. Local authorities, educational institutions and voluntary bodies want to maintain their present autonomy; this autonomy may be a weakness in implementing national

policies, but a strength in responding to local needs. Individual learners want the widest possible choice of provision with a reasonable guarantee of adequate financial support when required.

10.27 The way that paid educational leave is financed and administered in Sweden provides an example of how these various interests can be disaggregated in order to take proper account of them. A payroll levy on all employers is channelled into a central collective fund. The government varies the rate of levy (at present 0.25%) to control the fund's overall size. The funds are disbursed to regional boards, made up of local people, who decide the main educational needs of their region. Learners are free to choose from a wide range of courses (the scheme does not cover university degree studies) and employers are only able to delay employees' leave of absence for up to six months if presence at work is essential in that period. Study grants are awarded by the regional boards to cover the cost of maintenance and tuition during the study period; the level of grant received depends on the priority attached to the application by the regional board. Central government may specify certain forms of education or certain categories of person (for example, shift workers) to whom priority has to be given, particularly when applications exceed the funds available. By this system the government is able to control the overall level of expenditure and to specify the main priorities; industry knows how much it has to contribute through the payroll levy and is thereby relieved of any open-ended financial commitment; individual choice is very wide; and decisions on the disbursement of funds are made in the light of agreed local needs.

10.28 This Swedish example of how different interests can be balanced in a financing system for continuing education is not being advocated here as a direct model to copy in this country, although we could learn a good deal from it. It is limited to only one part of a potential entitlement system, not to the whole. An educational entitlement system here could proceed along other lines, perhaps as a development from the various existing financial mechanisms which currently operate independently of each other, but which could be moulded into a two-tier entitlement system. The first-tier of 'heavy' one-off full-time or equivalent entitlements might be financed by an extension of the mandatory grant system, linked with the arrangements for day and block release in vocational education and the retraining provision under TOPS. The second 'lighter' tier of accumulatable entitlements might be financed through govern-

ment funds, perhaps combined with some form of payroll tax or industrial levy.

10.29 It would be administratively convenient if the first tier could be built on existing arrangements. Any system bringing all educational entitlements under one roof, to provide a single quota for any and all types of education throughout life, is likely to need radical administrative and financial alterations and might be so complex as to be unworkable. Even a two-tier system might be difficult to operate: the second tier of 'lighter' accumulatable entitlements could be made reasonably straightforward for the users, but the first tier might become incomprehensibly hedged around with rules and regulations. That kind of complexity would defeat its own object. Simplicity for the users is as, if not more, important than administrative convenience.

10.30 Some points are clear. First, a comprehensive system of entitlement would have a profound effect on public attitudes to education; people would be free to make purposeful decisions about their educational needs at different times in their lives. Second, the administration and financing of an educational entitlement system is potentially very complex; yet simplicity, particularly for the users, is important if it is to achieve its object. Third, a number of sometimes conflicting interests would have to be balanced against each other, particularly in devising the funding arrangements. Fourth, paid educational leave is likely to play some part in an entitlement system, but will not on its own provide an adequate basis for it. The choice of a financing system is closely linked to decisions about coverage. Studies of the choices, including the potential of the present system, are needed to assess the various models of entitlement against such criteria as administrative efficiency, simplicity, maximisation of individual choice, and suitability for the promotion of economic, technological and social priorities in education. The Council therefore proposes to undertake studies of the feasibility of alternative educational entitlement systems with a view to establishing a comprehensive system of entitlement before the end of the current decade. Attention needs to be given to the problems discussed earlier of reconciling national needs and resources with individual needs.

10.31 The introduction of a system of entitlement to education throughout life would be a major advance in educational provision in Britain. By enabling people to receive education at any time in their lives according to their needs and abilities, it would lay the foundations of an educational system capable of

responding rapidly and effectively to the constantly changing needs of society.

EXTENDING THE PRESENT SYSTEM

10.32 However, that is a longer term goal. In the meantime, attention must be given to the development and rationalisation of the existing systems of financing learners. At present, many adults are prevented or discouraged from continuing their education by a number of limitations. Employees seeking to undertake training or education on their own initiative may, with a few exceptions in the public sector and some large companies, only be able to do so out of working hours; in working hours they are usually limited to opportunities planned or approved by their employers or fitting contractual obligations. But it could well be socially or economically beneficial for employees to be released from work for education with no direct relevance to their work or their employment contract; there are however very few arrangements for this type of release. Similarly there is little financial provision apart from TOPS for adults to enter courses of retraining or vocational preparation on their own initiative, largely because the mandatory grant system applies mainly to courses of full-time higher education. Whilst discretionary grants are available for non-advanced further education, these are rarely provided for adults and grant policy varies from place to place and from time to time. Grants are also much less commonly available to those undertaking part-time education and hardly at all to those 'learning at a distance'. Levels of financial support also vary between the different types of grants.

10.33 These limitations could be removed by creating appropriate financial mechanisms within the existing system. The interim result might still not be a system fully suited to continuing education, but until it is more widely accepted that a major change is necessary, a pragmatic strategy of extending and modifying existing financial mechanisms is more likely to bring more adults into education over the next few years.

10.34 It would be an advantage if the present system could be extended and modified, if only to avoid the administrative problems of introducing a new system of financing. This is not to say that the alternative systems discussed later in this chapter do not merit serious study. They do, but at the same time it is also necessary to discover the potential of the existing system. It might indeed turn out to be possible to extend and modify the present system until the point is reached when it could be

replaced by some other method of financing. The suggestions made in the following paragraphs explore the possibility of adapting the existing system of financing to further the development of continuing education.

10.35 In constructing a financing system various interests, which may not be fully reconcilable, have to be taken into account. The four major sets of interests — government, industry, providers of education, and individual learners — and their different, and possibly conflicting, needs and concerns have already been noted in paragraph 10.26.

10.36 In the short and medium term the simplest and most reliable way to encourage adults to enter education and overcome the barrier of financial hardship would be to extend the mandatory grant system for higher education to part-time and short full-time courses, and to distance education. The present restriction of mandatory grants to long full-time courses of face-to-face tuition in higher education means that there is no reliable source of financial help for those who are only able to study part-time, or to take a short full-time course, or to learn at a distance. By and large these are the study routes most open to most adults, and lack of financial support here limits these opportunities to those who can afford the course fees, the cost of books, study equipment, travelling and child care where necessary. Part-time study, short full-time courses, and distance learning are economical alternatives to full-time face-to-face tuition for adults because they remove the need for maintenance support. The expected fall in the number of young people entering full-time higher education offers an opportunity to use the resources released to expand this cost-effective provision for adults to pursue part-time, short full-time or distance learning courses, without a significant addition to the education budget. It should be remembered that this extension is needed to cover the costs of tuition and study expenses, and does not involve maintenance support costs.

10.37 Mandatory grants should also be extended to adults studying at all levels and not just in higher education. It is generally expected that the young should receive financial support from parents or employers to cover maintenance costs, and their schooling and non-advanced further education is provided free or at low cost; where these conditions do not hold, discretionary grants or maintenance allowances may be available. These expectations do not apply to adults, yet their educational needs are not confined to higher education. Very many could benefit

from study at non-advanced or more basic levels, and they may not be seeking the sorts of academic and vocational education currently provided mainly for the young. Many may be looking to education to help them carry out some adult role in society more effectively or to improve their standard of general education without necessarily wanting a qualification. Thus, the levels of financial support and the types of education requiring that support are not necessarily the same for young people in initial education as for adults continuing their education.

10.38 The mandatory grant system has four features that make it a suitable instrument, at least in the short to medium term, for widening the range of educational opportunities for adults. First, course designation allows priorities to be drawn and changed, making it an effective instrument of national educational policy. Second, students on designated courses receive reliable financial support when it is needed, unlike the discretionary grant system's susceptibility to local financial pressures and geographical anomalies. Third, course designations encourage educational institutions to make appropriate provision, secure in the knowledge that the costs will be met by fee income and public funds. Fourth, grant awarding procedures are well established and should be capable of extension into grant aid for continuing education without any need for new administrative arrangements.

10.39 Over the next few years it should be possible to ensure the controlled growth of a range of courses designated for mandatory awards, available to adults re-entering education, and offering a mixture of long and short full-time and part-time courses of face-to-face tuition and of distance education. Courses should preferably be designated at three levels: *basic* for those seeking to make up for a low level of elementary general education; courses of a similar academic level to those offered in *non-advanced* further education; and *high level* courses comparable to those offered in advanced further education and the universities. Just as those who at present receive adult education state bursaries remain eligible for subsequent mandatory grants, awards at one level should not disqualify their recipients from later eligibility for a grant for appropriate courses at a higher level. In this way adults with a very poor standard of education could move through the education system to achieve their highest potential.

10.40 This pragmatic extension of the mandatory grant system would no doubt produce some anomalies, and it would not by itself lead to any comprehensive system of financial support for

learners above the minimum school leaving age. However, it might usefully form one element in such a system, and it could shape and implement the priorities for the establishment of continuing education in the near future. In particular, it would provide financial support in the crucial areas of basic and non-advanced further education for adults seeking to improve their general education in preparation for higher academic or vocational education; and it would encourage forms of education designed for priority groups — women, manual workers, and members of ethnic minorities — wanting to raise their educational attainment to improve their future employment prospects.

10.41 Attention should also be given to the appropriate extension of paid educational leave in accordance with ILO Convention 140 and in line with practice in other countries, for example in Scandinavia, France, Belgium, and West Germany. It is increasingly recognised that employees are in a difficult position when seeking to improve their education. Those not in employment usually have little difficulty in finding time for part or full-time study, but the employed have little opportunity for full-time education, other than for short courses usually of vocational education approved by their employers. In general, the main opportunities the employed have to pursue the education of their choice lie in part-time study outside their normal working hours, generally in the evenings, although many employees are, of course, released (usually without pay) to take courses not serving the employers' direct interests. After a day's work it can be difficult to find the energy and concentration needed for intensive study. Paid educational leave is one way of enabling the employed to avoid these difficulties and benefit more fully from educational opportunities without loss of income or job security.

10.42 In ratifying ILO Convention 140, the UK government recognised in principle the importance of paid educational leave for general, vocational and trade union education for employed adults. This may be seen as a first step towards the creation of one substantial form of educational entitlement, but it is important to note that the scope of paid educational leave is by definition limited to the employed, and in many of the systems introduced in other countries the amount of educational entitlement is based on the record of employment, or limited to work-related education or training. Large numbers of adults do not have employers: the unemployed, the self-employed, job-changers, women at home, and the retired. Paid educational leave inevitably creates problems for small businesses

with few employees. Paid educational leave is rarely suitable for extended periods of education because of its costs, which include: the actual cost of the education; employees' pay and national insurance and pension contributions during the period of study; and the cost of replacement labour or work foregone. While there is evidence that employers expect to pay for a wide range of work-related education and training, much of the education to which adults want access will not necessarily be related to their employment. However, the main costs fall on the employers and, although financial mechanisms can be devised to disaggregate and spread the various costs, there must be a limit to what employers can be expected to pay.

10.43 For these reasons, paid educational leave cannot form the basis of any comprehensive system of entitlement. Even in those countries where it is now available it is primarily used to permit short periods of full or part-time education for the employed during working hours; only a few of these systems have complementary opportunities for those not in employment. The purposes for which employees may claim leave are often strictly limited, though the choice of courses may be wide. Paid educational leave has a part to play in any system of continuing education, but its contribution must not be judged in isolation from the whole framework of opportunities for adults that needs to be created.

10.44 At present paid educational leave is established by law only for trade union representatives under the Health and Safety at Work Act. For economic and social reasons certain forms of education for adults may need to be given priority in the near future. Paid educational leave might usefully be introduced to facilitate, for example, courses of general education for adults to improve their employability, courses to improve competence in industrial relations and other social roles, and pre-retirement courses. Until a comprehensive system of entitlements is introduced, the development of paid educational leave is likely to be obtained by industrial agreements through collective bargaining. This will lead to a lack of uniformity, which could be minimised by enabling legislation laying down the general conditions under which paid educational leave should be granted, so as to provide a general code of practice under which subsequent specific measures could be introduced as needs arise. The Council therefore believes that consideration should be given to the introduction of a code of practice for the extension of paid educational leave in line with developments in other countries in implementing ILO Convention 140.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

10.45 The current methods of enabling adults to continue their education with adequate financial support have already been described with recommendations for their extension: through the wider use of mandatory grants, through release from work by employers, and through the Training Opportunities Scheme. The harmonious development of these sources of support would lead to more adults being able to re-enter education in the future. Nevertheless this would not necessarily provide a secure and coherent system of financing to allow adults genuine freedom of manoeuvre in obtaining education to meet their own perceived needs. Perhaps the main reservation lies in what may be called 'the problem of impermeability'. At present industrial training and the public and private sectors of education operate on distinctly separate bases and the methods of financing learners are independent of one another. There is certainly a good deal of interconnection between industry and the public education service; many employees released from work and others receive TOPS grants to attend courses provided by the public sector of education. Similarly the private sector often caters for industry by providing education not generally on offer in the public sector, for example, crash courses in foreign languages for businessmen. But broadly, the source from which individuals receive financial assistance determines the range of educational opportunities open to them: employers offer assistance for some types of education and not for others; grants from public funds are open only for a restricted range of courses; and the opportunities for receiving financial assistance to take a course of education or training provided only by the private sector, apart from those sponsored by an employer, are rare. Because the source from which individuals receive their financial assistance often restricts their opportunities, there have been several proposals for alternative methods of providing financial support. Many have been linked to the idea of an educational entitlement for adults and, although the link is not essential, the object is similar: to create freedom of manoeuvre for adults to receive education or training irrespective of the provider. Four particular candidates among these proposals are considered here: educational insurance, a payroll tax, negative income tax, and study mortgages or loans.

10.46 *Educational insurance* does not need to be tied to employment record. A scheme analogous to National Insurance could be envisaged, whereby everyone would contribute, contributions being made in different ways and at different levels for the

employed, self-employed and those not in employment. 'Drawing out' from the scheme might be based on the principle of the National Health Service, entitling everyone to medical care, or on the principle of the State pension scheme, where the level of benefit depends on the contributions made. It would need to be decided whether the money collected through contributions should be used for the financing of institutions as well as learners. A further possibility is to tie the insurance principle much more closely to individual contributions, in the way that the level of life insurance benefit is tied to the level of premiums paid. This could take the form of a voluntary system, in which only the contributors were entitled to draw on the fund. There might be some system of loans secured against the cash surrender value of the policies to allow people to take their education before they had fully paid for it. There are many permutations on the idea of educational insurance and they would have to be investigated further to see how far the idea is workable.

10.47 The sort of questions which need investigation are: Who should contribute? Individuals, employers, or a combination of the two? What should be the level of contribution? Should it be a flat rate or related to the level of income? Should contributions be compulsory or voluntary? Who would be entitled to draw on the funds? Should employers, if they contribute, be allowed to cover their costs of maintaining financially those undergoing education or training, and of tuition? Should the level of benefit be related to the level of contributions? These questions indicate that any investigation of the merits of educational insurance might provide several models, each offering a different range of opportunities through different levels and types of contribution and benefit. Since insurance is essentially the provision of a future income, it would be worth examining the ways in which educational insurance might be linked to an educational entitlement.

10.48 Educational insurance is already in use in Norway to provide some of the funds for industrial education and training, although it is not simply a scheme for financing learners, since it also funds employers' training activities. Employers pay two-thirds and employees one-third of the contributions, but the sums collected are divided equally between management and the trade unions for educational purposes.

10.49 The clearest example of a *payroll tax* to finance continuing education comes from France. Under the Law of 1971 on education and training, businesses are obliged to pay into a

common fund a sum equivalent to 1.1% of their payroll. This money is disbursed to training and educational establishments to cover their costs. These establishments are often set up or are run by employers themselves to meet their own training requirements; in this way they recover their payroll tax. The fund may also be drawn on by employees to pay their normal wage or salary during the period of their education or training. The unique feature of this system is that it is not confined simply to specific job training to meet employers' needs. Employees can accumulate rights to a certain period of education or training of their own choice and they may draw on the fund to cover maintenance and tuition costs. This system is not a substitute for the publicly financed education service. It runs in parallel, offering continuing education opportunities mainly to those in employment, although there are arrangements for those not in employment to draw on the funds.

10.50 This approach has the great advantage of enabling employers to place their employees on training courses to meet their requirements while still allowing employees to participate in the education of their own choice. However, a payroll tax does have disadvantages: it penalises labour intensive industries, it is affected by economic fluctuations, and it is regressive in its effect since it taxes labour rather than wealth income.

10.51 Essentially the French system is a form of collective funding whereby a variety of contributors pay into a common fund which is then disbursed to individuals and institutions. The difficulty with collective funding is that it may be more suited to the financing of institutions than of learners. Those who contribute would do so mainly to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of education and training to further their own purposes. A system of collective funding to support learners, particularly if the learners were given a free choice of the educational purposes for which they might draw on the fund, might run into opposition from bodies concerned that their contribution was not being used for the purposes they wanted. In France, for example, although the Law gives considerable freedom in the choice of education that may be pursued, there is constant pressure to put the needs of industry first. There is a heavy preponderance of vocational and vocationally related education provided, general education being a very small element of the provision; and, although there is provision for them to draw on the funds, those not in employment are in a less secure position than the employed, partly because entitlement to education is tied largely to the record of employment. These difficulties are not necessarily inherent in a system of

collective funding for the financing of learners, and it should be possible to avoid them. However, the advantages of any taxation scheme would need to be weighed against the disadvantages of hypothecated revenues — the earmarking of taxation for predetermined purposes. This would presumably not apply to the same extent to arrangements based on the insurance principle.

10.52 Some people have argued that the most rational approach would be the introduction of a *negative income tax*, which has been the subject of governmental study in the past few years. Negative (or reverse) income tax seeks to replace all the various State benefits offered at present (for example, unemployment benefit, social security, old age pension) by a unified system of taxation to enable people to receive an income out of the general tax revenues when their income falls below a certain minimum level. If this system were applied to education, virtually all the present financial and administrative apparatus for the awarding of grants would be unnecessary. For example, many who currently qualify for grants would receive an income through the tax system and there would be automatic means testing (through educational tax allowances) for those already with an income. If tuition costs could be set against tax, there would be an incentive for many to take up part-time as well as full-time education. Those without an income who choose to study full-time would have the guarantee that their tuition and maintenance costs would be covered at a minimum level to avoid hardship.

10.53 Whilst it is difficult at present to see how such a system might operate, the possibility of financing learners through a negative income tax system deserves serious attention. Any investigation would need to estimate the likely costs to the public purse, taking into account the savings that might also be made. Paradoxically it would probably become essential to introduce a system of entitlement alongside this measure to ration out educational opportunities and to prevent abuse by 'perennial' students, setting limits on the amounts and types of education that could be offset against tax.

10.54 Countries such as Sweden and the United States depend heavily on *student loan* systems for financing learners, particularly at higher education level. The possibility of introducing some such system for higher education in this country has been the subject of recent discussion. An extension of this idea is that of *study mortgages* to be paid back by the recipient through the taxation system. This has some similarity to the idea of a

negative income tax. The use of the income tax system to recover the mortgage could overcome the repayment difficulties sometimes cited against this proposal. Repayment in this way would help to relate the value of the mortgage to the subsequent economic value of the additional education obtained. In arguing for such a system Cunningham[94] suggests that the main problem would be the high initial cost, but that the main attractions would include the direct recovery of the 'investment' over a period of time. He proposes that a scheme could be introduced in a graded form with the balance between payments and recovery altered as economic circumstances dictated. Cunningham's conclusion is that *"We should exercise at least as much ingenuity and confidence in investing in people, to their benefit and the community's, as we have spent over the years in developing consumer credit systems. The real gains, for all consumers, will be greater."*

10.55 Clearly there is much still to be examined in assessing the advantages and disadvantages of the possible schemes described above and the Council therefore proposes to initiate a study of alternative methods of financing support for learners which would be relevant to the development of a system of educational entitlements for adults.

ASSESSING FINANCING SYSTEMS

10.56 The object of a continuing education system is to make available the widest possible range of opportunities for education and training at all levels throughout life to all those above the age of compulsory schooling. These opportunities should be open at any time in life to any type of person without exclusion by reason of age, sex or any specific disadvantage or handicap. In assessing the extent to which any given system of financing is best suited to promoting this object both for institutions and for adult learners, three broad criteria can be applied: the degree of *stability* it affords, the degree of *accountability and control* it contains, and the degree of *freedom* it permits.

10.57 Stability requires that financing systems should offer learners guarantees of financial support to cover tuition and maintenance costs where necessary. Any assessment of a system should consider the strength of those guarantees, the levels at which they are provided, to whom they apply, for what purposes and under what conditions. Systems should also be assessed for the uniformity of treatment which they offer to all types of learners and the extent to which they provide incentives or disincentives for certain types. There should also be

some assessment of the extent to which any given system permits consistency of provision, so that programmes of education and training are not jeopardised by temporary economic fluctuations. At the same time assessment should cover the extent to which any financing system permits accountability for and control of the overall level of expenditure.

10.58 Freedom requires that financing systems should be assessed for their comprehensiveness — the extent to which they include or encourage certain types of learners and exclude or discourage others. They should also be assessed for their flexibility — the extent to which they allow learners to choose the content, level and mode of their education or training and the extent to which they permit learners to move freely between, for-example, different providing bodies. Financing systems need not be comprehensive in covering all types of learners for all purposes, but any assessment should determine the limits any given system places on learners. An important consideration thereafter would be the extent to which such a system might lend itself to developing a comprehensive range of opportunities for continuing education. Assessment should also examine the degree of flexibility of provision which each financing system permits — the extent to which institutions may put on the range of provision they seek to offer. It should also assess the extent to which institutions are enabled to collaborate with other bodies in schemes of education and training.

10.59 The Council considers that there should be an early examination of the extent to which existing methods of financing learners and institutions can be modified and extended in the short term to meet the growing educational needs of the adult population; and that concurrent studies should be made of the most practicable longer term methods of providing educational entitlements for adults and the ways in which these should be most appropirately financed: whether through mechanisms such as educational insurance, a payroll tax, negative income tax, or educational loans and mortgages, and including alternative methods of financing institutions as were discussed in chapter 9, such as collective funding.

Chapter Eleven
STAFFING AND TRAINING

11.1 The Council regards future policies and provision for the development of continuing education as comprehending all education for adults, except that which is undertaken as initial education in an uninterrupted progression after entering school as a child. Thus, as the preceding chapters have made plain, the providers of continuing education for adults include universities, polytechnics, institutes of higher education, colleges of education, technical and further education colleges, and short and long-term adult education residential colleges. Continuing education incorporates much industrial, commercial and public authority training, and encompasses adult general education offered in and through the outreach network of adult education centres, evening institutes, community centres and colleges, voluntary bodies, the Workers Educational Association and the university extension departments. This list demonstrates the enormous scope of continuing education, and indicates the very large number of staff who already have, or may be expected to acquire, experience in dealing with the educational demands and needs of adults. The professional attitudes and practices of the staff in all these institutions are critically important to any significant development of a comprehensive system of continuing education. Without their understanding and support this broad concept of continuing education cannot be translated from policies into practice. Staffing and the training of staff is therefore fundamental to the concerns of this report.

STAFFING

11.2 The education and training services employ a very large number of teachers and administrators. The largest proportion is engaged in the school sector, which currently in England and Wales employs about 450 thousand teachers. Staff numbers in the post-school sector are a good deal lower than this, but nevertheless there are well over a 100 thousand full-time staff in England and Wales and a much larger number of part-time teachers, particularly in the adult education sector which relies very largely on part-time appointments.

11.3 In the further education sector in England and Wales in 1979 the local education authorities were employing over 78 thousand full-time teaching staff. This comprised almost 17 thousand in polytechnics, about 60 thousand in further education colleges, and 2 thousand in adult education centres. In the same year the

universities in England and Wales employed almost 28 thousand full-time academic staff, of which just over 500 were in university adult education departments, and the Workers' Educational Association had a little over 100 full-time employees. It is much more difficult to obtain statistics for paid part-time teaching staff, on whom the adult education services rely so heavily and who also figure, although in much smaller numbers, in the rest of the further and higher education sector. It can be no more than a very rough estimate to suggest that in 1978/79 there were at least 75 thousand such teachers, and nearly 40 thousand part-time volunteer tutors in adult literacy work. The recent retrenchment in education budgets will have reduced some or all these figures, particularly among part-time adult education tutors, but an approximate estimate would suggest that, in any one year in the whole of the continuing education field, there are something over 100 thousand full-time staff and a similar figure for part-time, paid and volunteer, tutors, making a total of at least 200 thousand people engaged in the teaching of adults in England and Wales. Given that there is some shift in the composition of the population of part-time and volunteer teachers over time, and allowing for the likelihood of some double-counting between all the full and part-time staffing figures cited above, it remains reasonable to assume that at least a third of a million people have either a regular or intermittent experience of teaching adults. This is a very substantial human resource, which could be more fully co-ordinated and trained to realise a comprehensive system of continuing education.

11.4 With this size of educational work force already available there need not necessarily be any great increase in the overall number of staff required to move towards a continuing education system. More teaching and organising resources will be needed to cover, for example, the greater emphasis on part-time learning, the establishment of a network of local continuing education centres, and the development of such priorities as basic education, job-related education and social education. To an extent these increased demands could be met at little extra cost by the relocation, with appropriate retraining of present staff resources, particularly from the surplus manpower to be found over the next few years in the primary and secondary school sectors. Spare capacity could also appear in the further and higher education sectors in the second half of the 1980s as the fall in the birthrate affects the conventional recruitment of young adults. Staff costs are the principal item of expenditure in the education budget and the recent continued reductions in government funding for education clearly will

affect the maintenance of staff numbers. But in the Council's view these economic policies should neither be confused with, nor be justified by, policy decisions in response to demographic change. Staff numbers in the post-school sector should not be allowed to fall for irrelevant demographic reasons. On the contrary, the shift in the age structure of the population should be matched by the movement of staff resources from initial education towards continuing education.

11.5 With an increasing proportion of adults among the student population, many of them studying part-time or at a distance, staff contracts of employment, particularly for full-time staff, will need to allow for flexible working arrangements. Simple distinctions between 'contact' and 'non-contact' hours with students could fail to cope with a broader range of responsibilities, and could indeed prevent some desirable developments. Staff may expect in future to spend more time on programme planning, training, staff development and management, student counselling, liaison and joint projects with other bodies, and in less formal kinds of education within the community. Working hours will need to become more flexible, although there must be a balance between providing a service to fit adult learners' requirements and maintaining hours of work which are not too irregular and unsocial. There has been a particular problem with the remuneration of part-time tutors, who have generally been paid at a lower rate than their full-time counterparts. The recent move in further education to give some of them part-contracts, confering pro-rata parity with full-time staff, is to be commended, particularly where they are carrying virtually the same teaching responsibilities as full-time staff. Although it has to be noted that these new contractual arrangements have not been welcomed by some local education authorities, because they will add to education budgets and might therefore lead to corresponding cuts in provision. Since the growth of continuing education will require significant changes in staff responsibilities, these questions of appropriate remuneration may become more critical. It is certainly clear that continuing education will be hampered rather than helped by the terms of full-time employment contracts which were originally designed to meet the circumstances of initial education. It is equally clear that part-time staff contracts should be designed for the terms and conditions of service appropriate to their specific responsibilities, and not as inappropriate variants of the duties required of full-time staff.

TRAINING

11.6 The crucial importance of staff training to the development of

continuing education has already been stated. One of the main arguments for a comprehensive system of continuing education is the need for an increasingly highly trained work force possessing the abilities required to up-date knowledge and skills and to retrain quickly for new employment. This is an argument which cannot be ignored within the education and training field itself, yet up to now it has been seriously neglected. The present provision for staff training and development in the post-school education sector can only be described as patchy. The Department of Education and Science statistics of full-time teachers in the further education sector in 1979 show that of the 78,500 then in post over 43 thousand were regarded as 'untrained'. There are no comparable figures for the university sector, but the proportion of staff there without any training as teachers will be very much higher than in further education. Where it exists, pre-service training is relatively short and generally rather narrowly conceived, and there are only the most limited opportunities for subsequent in-service training. Educators are scarcely a good advertisement for the importance of continuing education. This situation will need to be drastically changed if present teaching staff resources are to be moved towards and within the post-school sector.

11.7 It is the school sector where staff training, mostly for professional certification in preparation for teaching, has been most actively pursued. In 1979 the Department of Education and Science classified as 'untrained' only 30 thousand teachers out of the total of over 440 thousand full-time teachers in maintained schools in England and Wales. This has in turn led to a concentration of educational research into the learning and teaching of children. The relative paucity of research into adult learning may be seen as the consequence of this dominant equation of children's learning with education. This is an equation which continues to be much too closely drawn in the training of school teachers; their pre-service and in-service training should be informed by an understanding of continuing education, not least because many of them undertake part-time teaching of adults. Much more research is now urgently needed into how adults learn. It is certainly not sufficient to regard adult students as no more than larger versions of school pupils. The derivation of the word 'pedagogy' should be observed and distinctions drawn with the new, and classicists might say exclusively male, coinage 'andragogy', which, clumsy as the word may sound, does indicate the idea of a distinct academic discipline in the understanding of adult learning.

11.8 The study of adult learning stands in need of academic

legitimation. More needs to be known about, for instance, its psychology, sociology, and management; and there is an almost complete gap in our knowledge of its economics — the costs and benefits of educating and training adults — which is vitally important to policy decisions. A coherent and intensive programme of research would be invaluable, but it must be accompanied and mutually supported by staff training facilities. A few institutions in higher education, mostly universities, have in recent years begun to combine research into, and teaching about, the education of adults. Much more needs to be done, for example, through an increase in research resources, particularly through a greater commitment by research funding bodies, through a closer integration of work by researchers in different academic disciplines and through links with research in the industrial and commercial training sectors.

11.9 Staff training and development in further education has received some encouragement from the reports in the late 1970s of the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers (ACSTT). While the proposals in these reports[95] have not all been formally commended and approved by the Department of Education and Science, they have nevertheless focussed regional and local attention on the need for a more systematic and integrated range of training provision,[96] which has in turn begun to improve both the quantity and the quality of the training available, for both full and part-time staff. These improvements would be greatly facilitated by a clearer national and regional approach to training content, the comparability between training programmes at local and national level, the progression through the ACSTT proposals for three stages of training, and the acceptable routes for validating courses. The Council considers that the ACSTT proposal for the creation of a National Forum[97] would provide the machinery for these necessary forms of national co-ordination and initiatives, and that therefore the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office should implement this proposal as soon as possible. It is encouraging to note that the setting up of the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers (ACSET) as the successor to ACSTT, and that this new committee has begun to study staff training and development needs in the further education sector. In examining these items, the Council trusts that ACSET will give attention to the wider context of continuing education.

11.10 In the wide field of continuing education it is important to make the most sensible use of limited training resources by fitting appropriate training to the particular needs of different types of

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staff. This will have special relevance to the length and depth of training required. These groups of staff (see paragraph 11.3 for the numbers employed) could be very broadly distinguished as:

Those in higher and advanced further education. Largely full-time, with a high proportion of subject qualifications, and a low proportion of professional adult teaching or educational management qualifications.

Those in non-advanced further education. Substantially full-time with a large minority of part-time. Medium proportion of subject qualifications and professional adult teaching or educational management qualifications, largely among full-time staff.

Those in adult education (formal and non-formal). Predominantly part-time, including a significant minority of volunteers, and relatively few full-time staff. Relatively low proportion of subject qualifications, but a high proportion of subject experience. Relatively high proportion of professional adult teaching or education management qualifications among full-time staff, but relatively low proportion among part-time tutors.

Obviously this kind of tabulation requires a good deal of refining to present any reasonably accurate picture of the present total work force, full and part-time, of perhaps 200 thousand, but it does suggest that there is enormous scope for training in adult teaching and educational management skills, both pre-service and in-service, for all staff. The broad grouping of qualifications, in this way indicates that within higher and advanced further education there is a considerable need for staff training in providing for and teaching adults; within non-advanced further education there is a need for more staff to become formally qualified in their subjects and in the teaching of adults; and within the adult education sector there is an urgent need for a comprehensive new structure to provide training for part-time staff.

11.11 The in-service training need for full-time staff has to be emphasised in view of the expectations of a relatively static size of work force facing new demands on its experience and skills. Equally the numerical importance of part-time staff must be recognised by appropriate forms of teacher training, which acknowledge the generally high level of subject experience of part-timers and the relatively limited amount of time which they are able to give to training; this would similarly apply to volunteer tutors, who are in effect unpaid part-time staff. The importance of part-time staff, whether paid or unpaid, to the future development of continuing education cannot be under-

estimated, and that importance requires serious attention to be given to preparing and supporting them in their educational work.[98] It follows that some full-time staff will need to be given, and trained for, specific responsibility for staff training and development within institutions and local education authorities.

11.12 Any consideration of the staffing and training needed for the development of continuing education raises questions as much about quality as quantity. While it is true that more staff will be required in certain areas, the main aim must be the effective provision and management of a wide variety of teaching systems to meet the needs of adult learners. This will require changes in the way staff go about their work, and this has implications for training as much as recruitment of staff. Training is also important for a deeper reason than simply meeting the changing circumstances of the next ten or twenty years. Educators themselves need to continue their learning if they are to be fully effective. This is obviously true for volunteers and part-time tutors, where training can help them to transmit skills and knowledge to others, but it is equally important for all members of staff to continue their professional development and for educational institutions to have staff development arrangements to facilitate this. The Council therefore considers that national initiatives are required from the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office, with the assistance of the Advisory Committee in the Supply and Education of Teachers, to ensure adequate pre-service and in-service training for the needs of staff engaged in the continuing education of adults; and that all institutions providing higher, further and adult education, whether formal or non-formal, should make arrangements for the training and continuing development of their full and part-time staff in the understanding and skills needed for the education and training of adult learners.

Chapter Twelve
LEGISLATION — THE 1944 EDUCATION ACT

12.1 It is becoming increasingly clear that the 1944 Education Act does not offer a sufficiently firm legislative base for the promotion of continuing education, both because of the conceptions underlying the Act and because of the Act's current interpretation. The Council considers that the Act needs to be amended to provide an adequate definition of a comprehensive system of continuing education and a suitable legislative framework for its development.

12.2 The words 'continuing education' and 'adult education' do not appear anywhere in the 1944 Education Act. The relevant sections and references are:

Section 1
"It shall be lawful for His Majesty to appoint a Minister (hereinafter referred to as "the Minister"), whose duty it shall be to promote the education of the people of England and Wales and the progressive development of institutions devoted to that purpose, and to secure the effective execution by local authorities, under his control and direction, of the national policy for providing a varied and comprehensive educational service in every area".

Section 7
"The statutory system of public education shall be organised in three progressive stages to be known as primary education, secondary education and further education; and it shall be the duty of the local education authority for every area, so far as their powers extend, to contribute to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient education throughout those stages shall be available to meet the needs of the population of their area".

Sections 8 to 40 are concerned with primary and secondary education: thirty-three sections covering twenty-eight pages. Sections 41 to 47 deal with further education in seven sections covering seven pages. Four of these sections (43 to 46) contain proposals, never implemented, for county colleges and for a system of compulsory part-time education up to the age of 18 for all young people leaving school below that age. Section 47 provides for interim arrangements during the Act's introduc-

tion. This leaves two sections covering further education generally: section 42 deals with the preparation of 'schemes of further education', which have since been overtaken by events and now appear to be of very little practical consequence, leaving section 41 as the Act's substantive section on further education.

Section 41

"Subject as hereinafter provided, it shall be the duty of every local education authority to secure the provision for their area of adequate facilities for education, that is to say:

(a) Full-time and part-time education for persons over compulsory school age; and

(b) leisure-time occupation in such organised cultural training and recreative activities as are suited to their requirements, for any persons over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by the facilities provided for that purpose;

provided that the provisions of this section shall not empower or require local education authorities to secure the provision of facilities for further education otherwise than in accordance with the schemes of further education or at county colleges".

Section 41 introduced into educational law the new concept of further education, which was to embrace educational provision beyond the compulsory stage. Section 114, dealing with interpretation, states that *"further education has the meaning assigned to it by section 41 of this Act"*. Taken together with sections 1 and 7, section 41 could be interpreted as encouraging the development of a system of continuing education and providing the powers to enable it to be implemented.

12.3 The principal instrument for giving effect to the Act's general intentions for further education was the requirement for the preparation of 'schemes of further education'. It was here that the identification of the new further education sector with immediately post-school vocational education first appeared. The Ministry of Education in 1947 offered advice to local education authorities on preparing these 'schemes' in Pamphlet No. 8 *Further Education,*[99] which was influential in establishing two trends of considerable significance for continuing education. The two parts (a) and (b) of section 41 were interpreted by the Pamphlet as referring to distinct sectors of education. The first was vocational education, mainly for young people starting out on working life, and the second was the more general education of adults to enrich their leisure and contribute to the needs of a civilised society. In its second chapter, entitled 'Preparation for Work', the Pamphlet states

" 'Nothing is better', said Solomon, 'than for a man to rejoice in his work'. This might well be a motto for every technical commercial, and art college; for it is the happy craftsman, no less than the happy warrior, 'who with a natural instinct to discern what knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn'. The community at large, while concerned that individual workers should have the skill to enable them to rejoice in their work, has a further more utilitarian interest in the efficacy of their training. For its standards of life and its social amenities rest on the efficiency of its individuals as workers; and this in turn depends upon the opportunities that are open to them to prepare for their chosen vocations, and to continue to improve their qualifications and skills during their working life. Thus, to a special degree, our fortunes tomorrow depend upon the extent to which our plans for technical and commercial education are placed today in the forefront of our reconstruction programme, and the vigour and vision with which they are carried through".(paragraph 21)

The subsequent paragraphs deal with more practical issues of local and regional colleges of further education, regional advisory councils and so on. The third chapter on 'Learning for Leisure' states

"If we do all that we might, it seems possible that education will be something to be taken for granted by adults and young people; a normal and natural requirement of our democratic society. For one thing, world events that affect us intimately have a habit of intruding upon the consciousness of the citizen and demanding some kind of considered reaction. For another, there is a growing realisation that leisure is not so many non-working hours to be got through as best as may be; but a possession to be wisely used in the development of the resources within oneself, and to be shared with other people". (paragraph 82)

12.4 Over the years the distinction between the two parts of section 41 has been drawn ever more sharply, to the point where nowadays part (a) is associated with work-related education, mainly as an extension of the initial education of young people straight from school, but also including a considerable amount of continuing vocational education for adults. This area is at present strongly supported by government policy and funding, and the enabling functions of section 41(a) are actively applied. On the other hand, part (b) is seen as dealing with continuing education not immediately related to work. The associations with leisure and recreation have not developed in the positive way advocated in the Pamphlet. Instead they have come to be

seen as activities on the margin of education; although an integral part of section 41, they are not regarded as 'real FE'. Indeed the term 'further education' no longer carries the same meaning as it did in the 1944 Act. It is now associated mainly with educational provision that is primarily vocational in character. However some areas of education fall uneasily between the now distinct perceptions of further education and leisure time activities.

12.5 For over thirty years the distinction between vocational and non-vocational education has been the administrative division on which the provision of much further education has been based. By the late 1940s it was apparent that one of the main priorities in education was an efficient system of vocational education for young people leaving school and entering work. The division between vocational and non-vocational education helped to focus attention on this need and brought about an administrative system that enabled courses of vocational education to be given priority in the allocation of resources.

12.6 As the creation of an effective system of vocational education for the young was increasingly realised, colleges of further education found themselves wanting to branch out into other areas of education which, while not strictly related to work, were nevertheless of great importance. The problem therefore arose of ensuring that adequate resources were devoted to these other forms of non-vocational education. This was resolved to some extent by classifying them as vocational rather than non-vocational. In this way similar levels of resources could be made available to them as to strictly vocational courses. In consequence the distinction between vocational and non-vocational eduation has gradually become a distinction between high priority and low priority courses. This is not a satisfactory solution. While there is no difficulty in giving high priority to courses of vocational education, there is a constant struggle to classify as vocational those courses which are not strictly related to work but which on educational grounds merit priority.

12.7 There is broad agreement among many professional educators that the distinction between vocational and non-vocational education is no longer tenable. One Director of Education in his response to the Council's discussion paper *Towards Continuing Education* was moved to describe the distinction as *"absurd and iniquitous"*. No simple two-fold division can possibly give an adequate classification of the enormous spectrum of educational activity, particularly when the very important social, civic

and cultural areas of adult general education are relegated to the negatively defined category of non-vocational. Moreover, priorities may vary from place to place and from time to time and a two-fold division can neither capture various orders of priority nor variations in priority. In fact the whole basis for classifying courses as work-related or not is suspect, not least because it makes untenable assumptions about learners' aims. Courses provided for vocational purposes may well equip a person with skills of value beyond the workplace and, conversely, education that is not strictly work-related may still equip people with important skills in the world of work. Similarly attendance on vocational courses does not necessarily imply an intention to obtain work in that area. More importantly, attendance on a course of education not directly linked to work does not necessarily mean that it will not improve vocational competence.

12.8 For these reasons many educators now believe that the division between vocational and non-vocational education is a major obstacle to future development and should be abolished. It assumes distinctions in learners' minds which are artificial, and it embodies an order of priorities which are no longer relevant. While it allocates adequate resources for courses of formal education mainly for young adults to obtain academic or vocational qualifications, it seriously impedes the allocation of adequate resources for equally important forms of education not directly related to work nor leading to qualifications. This affects young people undergoing their initial education as well as adults, but its effects are and will be most marked in continuing education where it limits the flexibility of institutions to respond to increasingly diverse needs.

12.9 The low priority accorded to non-vocational provision for adults is not inherent in the Education Act. It reflects the failure of the early official interpretation of the Act to survive the rapid growth of vocational further education for young adults, particularly after the government White Papers on *Technical Education* and *Better Opportunities in Technical Education,* published in 1956 and 1961 respectively. [100] The most obvious developments in vocational further education under the Act have been for the 16 to 19 age group, but the growth of vocational provision for adults has also been considerable. Any increase in government encouragement for adult post-experience vocational education would not require any legislative changes. It is much more doubtful whether the same can be said of other types of education for adults. The Act is based on the devolution of powers to local education authorities, which carry out their

responsibilities most confidently within a clear statutory framework. Custom and practice have combined to relegate 'leisure-time activity' to, or beyond, the margin of the educational system, and non-vocational adult education has suffered from this equation with leisure-time activity. The scale of provision for adult general education is limited, notably in basic education as the Council has already made clear.[101] Social education has also been neglected. The public education service offers relatively little in the way of coherent practical programmes of parent or health education; and forms of education designed to enable people to understand complex political questions and the political process, to act as informed citizens in a democratic society, to fulfil important civic roles at work and in the community, are all far less well developed than in many other advanced countries. None of these merits relegation to the bottom division.

12.10 The weakness of non-vocational or adult general education stems largely from its being regarded and often described as 'non-mandatory' or 'non-statutory' provision. Whatever the intentions behind the 1944 Education Act these forms of education for adults, not related to work or not leading to a qualification, are most certainly 'statutory' since the Act requires every local education authority to secure their provision. At present, when local education authorities are under intense pressure to cut back expenditure, non-vocational adult education is being subjected to disproportionately large cuts. Some local education authorities are moving towards making this provision self-financing, a policy which will inevitably lead to the educational neglect of those least able to afford tuition, often the least educated. A few authorities have gone as far as suspending virtually all non-vocational adult education for periods of time in an effort to save money. This has put them in danger of legal action for failing to fulfil their duties under the Education Act, but prosecutions have not taken place largely because it is not clear what a local education authority's duties are under the Act in respect of non-vocational adult education.

12.11 The Council cannot accept these doubts about the requirement to provide adult general education. It is recognised that work-related education and education leading to academic or professional qualifications are extremely important parts of our educational provision, indeed one of the Council's aims is to ensure that adults are more freely able to take up opportunities for these forms of education. At the same time what is currently termed 'vocational' education should not be preserved at the expense of adult general education and its provision of cultural,

social and civic education, which rarely leads to academic or professional qualifications but for which there is a patent need among the adult population. Some of the respondents to the Council's discussion paper *Towards Continuing Education* were so concerned at the way in which adult general education is at present being decimated that they demanded that local education authorities should be obliged by law to maintain a minimum standard of provision. It is extremely doubtful whether such a demand could be met without a massively detailed regulatory framework foreign to the traditions of education in this country, but this response does illustrate the serious concern many adult educators feel about the reduction in, and sometimes virtual disappearance of, forms of education for which in future there is likely to be a greater, not smaller, need.[102] What is required is a balanced provision, which takes into account the needs of the whole community and which does not assign priority to some forms of education over others in such a way as to meet the needs of one section of the population by excluding the needs of others. At present this balance is lacking, but it could be achieved by amending the 1944 Education Act.

12.12 The Council's Chairman wrote to the Secretary of State for Education and Science in 1978 recommending revisions to the Act, including the addition of specific references to continuing education. It subsequently became clear that the Department was considering possible amendments to the Act, when it published in 1981 the report of a working party set up to review the legal basis of further education. The report concluded that there should be no special provision for, or at least no specific mention of, continuing and adult education in any new legislation because *"Both terms are imprecise and we do not believe that widely acceptable definitions can be found"*.[103] The report went on to argue that *"Continuing education is a concept which, in its broadest interpretation, embraces virtually the whole of further education as it is now understood. To adopt these terms in legislation would therefore amount to tautology"*. However, the working party did accept that it was *"clearly necessary to redefine FE in statute in such a way as to include the full spectrum of adult and continuing education, and to obviate unrealistic distinctions between the vocational and general educational aspect"*.

12.13 In the period following the 1944 Act the main instrument for implementing new policy was intended to be section 42 and its requirement for local education authorities to draw up 'schemes of further education'. These were taken more serious-

ly by some authorities than by others. Few of the developments following the 1965 White Paper[104] and the subsequent development of local, district or regional colleges, followed by colleges of advanced technology and polytechnics, were accompanied by any revision of these schemes; and, although with the re-organisation of local government in 1974, a number of the new authorities drew up new schemes, many did not. The result is that the schemes of further education which may still be in existence bear little resemblance to the reality of further education today. Indeed the working party on the legal basis of further education reported that *"because the schemes of further education for which the 1944 Education Act provides have in most authorities not been maintained, the vires of much further education provision may be in doubt"*.[105] In other words there probably is no legal basis for much of the current provision of further education.

12.14 In its formal response [106] to the working party's report, the Council recognised continuing education as an integral part of further education, and also as part of higher education, but stated that *" 'Further Education', while comprehensive in intent, is commonly identified with full or part-time vocational courses"*. To avoid this semantic confusion, the Council repeated its earlier recommendation to the Secretary of State that it is necessary to include specific mention of continuing education in the comprehensive definition of further education to be embodied in new legislation, by reformulating the present section 41 along the following lines:

> Further, Adult and Continuing Education
> *.....it shall be the duty of every local education authority to secure the provision for their area of adequate facilities for further, adult and continuing education, that is to say full-time and part-time education for all persons over the compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit thereby, such facilities to include general, basic, cultural, physical, social, civic and vocational education.*

This kind of formulation would achieve several objects. By explicit references to continuing education and to persons of all ages, it would focus attention on the *duty* of each local education authority to make provision for adults wishing to continue their education, as well as for young people wishing to extend their initial education beyond the statutory minimum school leaving age. The working party's report came out in favour of placing such a duty on each local authority, although it noted that some of the local authority representatives in the group recommended that *"for those aged 19 or over, the responsibility of LEAs should be expressed as a power only"*. In

the Council's view the responsibility must be presented as a duty on each local education authority. The Council's suggested reformulation of section 41 would provide for that and would also focus attention on an educational policy for adults and provide a clear reference point for published statements by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office, whether regulatory or simply encouraging. By amalgamating sections 41(a) and 41(b) the reformulation aims at a comprehensive and unified approach to the whole field of continuing education, and the detailing of the various kinds of education involved should help to ensure that local education authorities carry out the duty of making a varied and balanced provision. The deletion of the proviso at the end of the present section 41, would remove the uncertainty about the responsibility of local education authorities to secure provision in the absence of the now largely obsolete schemes of further education.

12.15 It might be argued that it is unnecessary to amend the 1944 Education Act on the grounds that any hindrance to the development of a balanced and comprehensive system of continuing education derives from the current interpretation of the Act, and not from the Act itself. Setting aside the recent interpretation that the Act now provides no legal basis for much further education provision, it might be sufficient for the Department of Education and Science to draw up a new set of directions to replace *Pamphlet No. 8* and to give due regard to the needs of adults. But an amended Act would have the immense advantage of signalling the government's intention to give the necessary national lead by pursuing a vigorous policy for continuing education. In education the relationships between central and local government are critical. In the first twenty-five years of the operation of the 1944 Act the Ministry (subsequently Department) of Education was largely concerned with regulating the growth urged upon it by local education authorities wishing to develop primary, secondary and further education. The position is now very different, and a new view of educational legislation as the protector of national standards is needed.

12.16 Since the introduction of a new policy for continuing education would oblige local education authorities to make a major re-assessment of the provision of post-school education in their areas, it might appear attractive to re-activate section 42 and call for new schemes of further education. There are two objections to this. First, unless they deemed it essential, authorities would be extremely reluctant to undertake an exercise which would undoubtedly lay a heavy burden on them at a time when they

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are seeking to contain expenditure. Second, it might be unnecessary to call for new schemes since other instruments for implementing policy are available. For example, the provision of information and counselling services, the establishment of consultative structures, the management of institutions and the provision of staff training structures could probably be dealt with by amending the Further Education Regulations, while the extension of the mandatory grant system could be accomplished through amendments to the Award Regulations. The redisposition of resources and in particular the establishment of adequate networks of local continuing education centres might well be brought about by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office through Administrative Memoranda, while other measures might be encouraged by Circulars. Such instruments would have to be used in any case to implement new policy and it might simply prove an additional and unnecessary step to call for new schemes of further education. An amended section 42 might lay down the specific duties expected of local education authorities in making provision for further education. The relevant part of a new section 42 might read:

(1) In executing their functions under section 41 (see paragraph 12.14 above) *every local education authority shall have regard to the importance of:*
(a) the establishment of an information, advisory and counselling service for adults;
(b) the provision of regular training for full-time and part-time staff and volunteers;
(c) the establishment of a network of local centres for the provision of further, adult and continuing education.

(2) A local education authority shall in exercising its functions under section 41 have regard to any facilities for further, adult and continuing education provided for their area by universities, educational associations, and other bodies, and shall establish a consultative structure including such bodies.

(3) A local education authority shall have the power to give financial and other support to such bodies in respect of their work in further, adult and continuing education.

12.17 In summary, the Council considers that the 1944 Education Act should be amended so as to put the education of adults on a much firmer statutory basis. Sections 41 and 42 should be reformulated with the needs of adults as well as of young people in mind. Section 41 should contain a comprehensive definition of continuing education, should amalgamate the

existing sections 41(a) and 41(b), and the existing proviso to sections 41 and 42 should be deleted. The reformulation should make explicit the duty of local education authorities to secure a varied and balanced provision in their area to meet the needs of people of all ages in the community. Amendments to section 42 should make explicit the duties of local education authorities in making provision for continuing education. Pending these statutory amendments new regulations or memoranda of guidance should be issued by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office, which will give due regard to the educational needs of adults, will counteract the current interpretation of section 41 and its negative effects on educational opportunities for adults, and will set out the duties of local education authorities to secure a varied and balanced educational provision to meet the needs of adults.

12.18 The Council has been favourably impressed by the stimulating effect of the 1976 Adult Education Act in Norway in providing a comprehensive definition of the field of education for adults and in establishing a central Adult Education Council with a statutory requirement to monitor the implementation of the Act. Consideration needs to be given to the establishment of a similar Council in any amending legislation in England and Wales.

Chapter Thirteen
PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

13.1 In this final chapter we bring together the conclusions drawn and proposals made throughout the report. These are in summary Council's considered view of the 'priorities for action' which, taken together, could form a practical basis for a coherent national policy for the promotion of continuing education. To put these priorities into context we first of all briefly record the report's main arguments for the creation of a comprehensive system of continuing education (see principally chapter 2) and the associated need for consultation and collaboration among and within agencies and institutions, and we add a short account of the Council's conviction that policies must now be rapidly transformed into practice so as to provide continuing education and training for all adults at all levels of attainment wherever they may live.

13.2 Over the next twenty years this country will experience profound economic and social changes, largely as a result of the increasingly rapid spread of existing and new technologies. This could lead to unprecedented shifts in economic activity, and to marked changes in the patterns of work and leisure (or non-work), with less working time needed for much more highly skilled work. Quality will have to replace quantity. Adaptability will become essential. The present scale of these changes is small compared with the future effects of the accelerating speed of change which will reach in the next few years into many more sectors of the economy to affect far larger sections of the population. The idea of holding the same job for life is becoming increasingly untenable. Those with the greatest capacity to adapt will survive successfully; those least adaptable, nations as well as persons, will fail.

13.3 Continuing education offers one route to adaptability in a world, where it is no longer possible to go on relying on the knowledge and skills acquired in youth. As it becomes more difficult to predict the knowledge and skills needed for adult life, the education of young people will have to concentrate on the learning skills to be used and developed throughout adult life. Thus education is not just an event in childhood but an experience available at any time in life.

13.4 If it is to promote adaptability and creativity in the adult population, continuing education cannot be related solely to work. While economic success depends on the technical know-

ledge and skills of the working population, the success of specific job training depends on the general educational attainments of those being trained. Adaptability at work is also reflected in the ability to work co-operatively with others and to contribute to the shaping and taking of decisions. These abilities are most readily formed through the cultural and social aspects of general education. Just as good training for employment develops skills beyond the needs of specific jobs, so general education develops skills relevant to *all* the demands of everyday life including work. Continuing education must therefore be comprehensively planned to include all the forms of education and training available to adults beyond their initial education.

13.5 New technologies reduce the demands of work and enhance opportunities for leisure, but they also put a premium on the adaptability of knowledge and skills not possessed by those with only limited educational attainments. Particularly at risk are: those women whose levels of educational experience and aspiration often put them at a disadvantage; members of ethnic minority groups who are often locked into multiple deprivations of poor education, poor housing and poor employment prospects; those manual workers who left school at the minimum age and have had no further education or training; young people entering the labour market for the first time, often with few skills to offer; and the retired, particularly the growing number of those retiring early, still physically and mentally active, but with far fewer opportunities to contribute to society in any satisfying and constructive way. A comprehensive system of continuing education would provide the poorly educated with much wider opportunities to improve their general level of education and hence their employability: it would remove people temporarily from the labour market, making room for others, particularly young people, to take their place; and it would provide opportunities for adults to play a more creative part in cultural and social activities. But it is among the least educated sectors of the adult population that continuing education has until now been least attractive; it has been the more educated adults who have demanded more education for themselves. If this pattern continues, the gap between the well educated and the poorly educated could become even wider. There must be a determined effort to attract back into education all those adults who have until now regarded it as irrelevant to their needs. The Council stresses the need to plan provision for priority groups (paragraph 4.11), because it is all too easy to respond to the educational 'haves', who can make their demands known, and to ignore the

'have-nots', whose needs are generally far more difficult to identify and meet.

13.6 The creation of a comprehensive system of continuing education, which is efficient, flexible and effective in responding to needs, requires adequate arrangements for consultation and collaboration. The public education authorities, national and local, have a responsibility to ensure, within the resources available, the provision of a balanced range of educational opportunities to meet the needs of the whole population. This provision is generally made both directly by the local education authorities and through central and local government's promotion of educational activities by other bodies. But this important promotional function is at present not sufficiently exercised. While the Department of Education and Science, the Welsh Office and the local education authorities do promote the educational activities of other bodies through consultation in planning, through grants, and through the pooling of expertise and resources in collaborative ventures, these promotional activities are rarely part of any coherent plan of priorities and responsibilities for the education of the adult population.

- At national level many government departments and statutory bodies are engaged in providing for continuing education and training. The separate responsibilities exercised by the Department of Education and Science, and the Welsh Office, the Department of Employment and the Manpower Services Commission can lead to unhelpful administrattive and policy divisions between education and training, which are now being further divided as education budgets are cut and training resources are increased. No doubt there are arrangements for inter-departmental consultation and collaboration, but there is no mechanism for drawing up and carrying out a coherent national policy for continuing education, for assessing priorities, allocating responsibilities and promoting collaborative ventures.

- The Regional Advisory Councils for Further Eduation have important responsibilities at regional level for facilitating the efficient use of resources through the avoidance of duplicated effort, the identification of new areas of need and the promotion of educational innovation. However the weight of their attention is on work-related rather than general education, and on students completing their initial education.

- At local education authority level arrangements for consultation and collaboration among the different providers are not widely developed. Within educational institutions catering predominantly for adults much more could be done to build

effective consultative and management links with students so as to help in assessing the best use of available resources and the nature and scope of the institution's activities in the education of adults in the local community.

13.7 The Council is convinced that it is imperative to begin work now to translate policies into practice in order to achieve, over the next twenty years, the comprehensive provision of continuing education and training for all adults. In support of that conviction we contend that:

- Any highly industrialised country which cannot refute the charge that it is an under-educated society is condemning its own future.
- Every country should ensure the highest possible levels of self-reliance and self-fulfilment among all its citizens, for both their individual and collective well-being.
- A democratic society can only be sustained by its individual citizens' ability to take part in and contribute to economic, social and cultural change and growth.
- The presently perceived inequalities in our society, which can adversely affect the relationships between government and people and between management and employees, partly reflect the inequalities in the past and present provision of educational opportunities. The widening of those opportunities would help to reduce those inequalities.
- Education must therefore be regarded and planned as a continuing process throughout life. It is no longer sufficient to regard education as an early and finite early process in preparation for adult life.

From this we conclude that:

- In this continuing process of education, the schooling of young people should be regarded as the initial preparation and encouragement to proceed to the much longer period of adult life, when the skills and enjoyment of learning acquired at school will be continuously exercised and developed. Nobody should leave school feeling that their education is finished.
- This continuing learning should comprise both education and training, as those terms are currently understood and applied, and a continuing education system should be built onto , in order to extend, the present provision of education and training for adults in the public and in the non-statutory sectors.

This leaves us in no doubt that:

- It is of the highest importance for the development of continuing education that a clear national policy should be

agreed. Without this agreement we will continue to lack the impetus needed to encourage and shape the local provision from which the whole system must grow.

13.8 In the Council's view, a substantial move can be made towards a system of continuing education through the reallocation of some existing resources, rather than through any significant additional funding, because the first and fundamental requirement is a shift in attitudes and organising arrangements. However, there are some developments which will have to wait on an increase in public education budgets. This will clearly depend on the prevailing analysis of the state of the national economy and the political determination to increase the public funding of the education of adults. When continuing education has achieved a higher political priority, the ways in which its growth might be financed could become more various and less constricted, as discussed in chapters 9 and 10. Since the setting of priorities in the allocation of public funds for education must remain a political decision, many of the priorities identified in this report will depend on political decisions about the educational and economic appropriateness of their implementation, both in size of funding and timing.

13.9 In the following paragraphs we bring together as 'priorities for action' the proposals advanced and the conclusions drawn in the preceding chapters. This statement of priorities covers what we think are the main issues to be resolved in spanning the gap between the arguments in favour of a comprehensive system of continuing education and the policies and practices needed to transform them into the reality of adults learning. The summary also contains our suggestions in relation to three questions about implementing the priorities — when should they be introduced, by whom, and at what order of additional cost?

13.10 However, it is neither realistic nor possible at this stage and level of consideration to be extremely precise about timetables and additional expenditure. We have therefore divided the proposed timetable for implementation into four broad periods covering the next twenty years: *immediate future* meaning within the next couple of years; *short-term* — within the next three to five years; *medium-term* — within the next five to ten years; and *long-term* — the following ten years up to the turn of the century. Clearly the proposed implementation period of some of our priorities does not fall neatly within just one of these periods; thus, we have indicated the full span of time when the proposed start and final establishment extends over more than one period.

13.11 Our judgement of the *additional* expenditure needed to implement the priorities is difficult to express in absolute figures. To provide anything but broad approximations would require detailed proposals and costings which would be premature. We consider it more appropriate and realistic to indicate the *relative* order of additional expenditure likely to be required. That is to say relative among the various priorities proposed, and relative for each separate priority to the current overall annual expenditure on the education and training of adults and to the very much larger total expenditure on all education and training. This has been shown in four categories. *Category I* signifies no more than some thousands of pounds; *category II* suggests additional expenditure of several hundred thousands; *III* a few millions of pounds; and *IV* all orders of expenditure above that. These broad categories refer to annual expenditure across England and Wales and include both current and capital costs. We would emphasise that these very broad orders of additional costs offer no more than relative indicators of the financial implications of the proposals and some measure of the economic and political decisions required to implement them. In our view none of the proposals would cost anything more than the equivalent of a *very small proportion* of the present total expenditure on education and training.

13.12 In ascribing responsibility for the implementation of the proposals, we have indicated only those organisations which, in our view, should be primarily responsible. However, the future development of continuing education will require co-operation and concerted action, and therefore none of the many interrelated aspects of that development can be the exclusive concern of any one body or institution. The following paragraphs group our priorities according to the issues examined in the preceding chapters.

Educational guidance services for adults (chapter 5).

13.13 Educational information, advisory and counselling services should be locally available to all adults to help in identifying their educational needs and in finding the best ways of satisfying them. These services would promote a more efficent use of educational resources and also provide educational institutions with information about local needs and demands.

- Local education authorities and other providing agencies, including public libraries, should seek co-operative ways of establishing or supporting these services locally as soon as possible. (Paragraphs 5.4, 5.6 and 5.13). Initially emphasis might be put on securing a network of information services with

the subsequent addition of advisory and counselling elements. (Paragraph 5.5) *Local education authorities and other agencies: II: in the immediate future and the short-term.*

- The Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office might fund a number of pilot research and development projects, the results of which should be made known to local education authorities and other agencies, with recommendations about the most effective ways of organising these local services. The results should be related to complementary research in the credit transfer feasibility study. (Paragraph 5.7) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: I: in the immediate future and the short-term.*

Access to, and co-ordination of, the full range of provision (chapters 4, 6 and 7).

13.14 All institutions in the post-school sector should actively encourage adult participation at all levels of their provision. A full sequence of attainment levels should be made available through co-operation, where appropriate, with neighbouring institutions. To ensure the accessibility of a full range of provision in each area there should be consultative planning at local, regional and national levels among all the relevant statutory and non-statutory bodies. (Paragraph 7.13) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office, regional advisory councils, local authority associations, local education authorities, educational institutions and other agencies: I: from the immediate future.*

Co-ordination at local level is particularly important since many of the decisions about the practicability of provision are made there. There should be more emphasis on the local education authorities' role as promoters of continuing education. The establishment of local development councils for the education of adults in every LEA area, widely representative of all the education and training interests in the area, would provide the basis for local co-operation in disseminating information on local provision, co-ordinating provision, and reviewing provision to identify and fill any gaps. *Local education authorities and all other local interests in education and training: from the immediate future.*

Range of provision (chapter 6).

13.15 There should be the widest possible range of provision to ensure that as many adults as possible can readily continue their education. They need to be able to re-enter the education system at the time and level best suited to their own circumstances, and, after re-entry, to be able to proceed through the

system according to their own requirements. The provision of this wide range of opportunities would allow more adults to build on their existing skills and knowledge, and would allow institutions to test the demand from adults for education. The re-entry of large numbers of adults to the education system calls for widespread provision of the following kinds:

- *Basic education* to equip adults who have a very low level of general education to take the first steps into non-advanced education. Developments in this field are already being promoted by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, but longer term national planning and implementation is required through, for (Paragraphs 4.5, 6.4 and 6.5) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office, Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, Manpower Services Commission, local education authorities, educational institutions: III: from the short-term onwards.*

- *Post-basic* to span the gap between the basic level and the sorts of competencies required in the formal education system at GCE O-level and equivalents. (Paragraphs 6.6 and 6.7) *Educational institutions: II: from the short-term onwards.*

- *Return to study* to restore confidence in the ability to resume study and the skills to undertake it. (Paragraph 6.8) *Educational institutions: II: from the short-term onwards.*

- *Bridging and access courses* to acquire the skills and knowledge required to enter higher academic and professional education. (Paragraph 6.9 ff) *Educational institutions: II: from the short-term onwards.*

Entry procedures (chapter 6).

13.16 The entry requirements normally used to assess young people's academic suitability are not necessarily the best indicators of adults' suitability. They take no account of the skills, knowledge and experience gained by adults outside the world of education; they may also not take account of adults' potential and determination to succeed.

- All institutions of further and higher education should review their admission procedures for each course for which academic or professional entrance requirements are normally laid down. Where reasonable, a policy of open entry for adults to these courses should be operated. (Paragraph 6.25) *All institutions: from the immediate future.*

- Wherever possible alternative admissions procedures should be available to adult entrants. (Paragraphs 6.14 ff) *All institutions: from the immediate future.*

- A national credit transfer system should be set up to permit

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adults to offer alternative qualifications, either for entrance to a course or for exemption from part of a course. (Paragraph 6.17) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: II: from the short-term.*

- Research and development work should be set in hand on a range of adult alternatives to GCE A-level examinations. (Paragraph 6.16) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office, Examination Boards: I: from the immediate future.*
- There should be a study of the feasibility of establishing a national framework for the certification of courses in continuing education. (Paragraph 6.30) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: I: in the immediate future.*
- Where adult candidates are unable to meet the entrance requirements, open entry courses should be available to provide the prerequisite knowledge and skills as quickly as possible. (Paragraphs 6.3 ff) *All institutions: II: from the immediate future.*
- Information on all the forms of entry procedures should be made widely available (Paragraph 6.25) *All institutions: from the immediate future.*

Local centres for continuing education (chapter 7)

13.17 There is at present not enough accessible local provision. A key element in the creation of a comprehensive system of continuing education is the establishment of a comprehensive network of local centres to provide: ease of access to education, especially for those who cannot find time or money to travel long distances; attractive environments for learning in the front line of an educational system actively seeking to encourage hitherto reluctant adults to enter education; local bases within the community from which staff can provide education in other settings — at work, at home, in local clubs and centres — either directly or in collaboration with other organisations. These local centres need not be large and may sometimes be able to be accommodated in buildings surplus to requirements in the initial education sector. This will require:

- Preparation of plans at national, regional and particularly local level (Paragraphs 7.13 and 7.14) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office, local authority associations, local education authorities: in the immediate future.*
- Development of the network of centres at the local level. (Paragraphs 7.12 ff) *Local education authorities: III: from the short-term.*

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Rigidities of time and place (chapter 8).

13.18 New modes of learning should be rapidly developed to overcome the limitations of physical attendance at set times in particular places. Priorities for action should include:

- Rigidities in the time-tabling of existing provision should be reviewed to find ways of attracting more adult learners. (Paragraphs 8.13 ff) *All institutions: from the immediate future.*

- Development of more part-time provision and complementary child-minding facilities. (Paragraphs 8.1 ff and 8.13) *All institutions: II: from the immediate future.*

- Appropriate incentives to expand short full-time course provision. Adjustment of full-time equivalency ratios to take account of the additional workloads required for part-time education, and consideration of short full-time courses of up to two weeks duration as comparable to part-time provision for allocating resources through the full-time equivalency ratios. (Paragraphs 8.5, 8.11 and 8.12) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office, local authority associations, local education authorities: III: from the short-term.*

- A study of the practical difficulties facing adult students, particularly those wanting to study part-time, to indicate how the existing structure of educational provision can be adjusted to overcome these difficulties. (Paragraph 8.6) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: I: within the short-term.*

- Positive support for educational release from work for those working unconventional hours. (Paragraph 8.14) *Employers, all institutions: from the short-term.*

- Development of modular courses. (Paragraph 8.7 ff) *All institutions: II: from the immediate future.*

- The provision of a national information service on credit transfer, as currently being examined by the Department of Education and Science, and development of operational arrangements for transferability of credit. (Paragraphs 6.29 and 8.10) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: II: from the short-term.*

These developments within existing provision could be complemented by the exploitation of new technologies to provide new opportunities:

- Open access systems, including both distance learning and independent learning, could be among the most important educational innovations in the next twenty years; the growth of independent study facilities and self-help groups should therefore be encouraged. These developments should be assisted

through the setting up of centres for independent learning within established institutions, and consortia, or a national body, to provide centrally produced materials and ensure compatible systems and standardisation of equipment; and through the sponsorship of experimental studies and national assessment and support. *(Paragraphs 8.17, 8.20 ff, 8.37, 8.39 and 8.40) Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office, Council for Educational Technology, selected institutions, broadcasters, public libraries: III: from the short-term.*

- Broadcasting has already proved to be a highly effective element in distance learning, but greater use should now be made of general broadcasting for educational purposes. Access to 'prime time' for educational broadcasting will remain very important, and the educational opportunities shortly to be available through the Fourth Channel, and through all the new video facilities for learning, should be exploited. (Paragraphs 8.28 ff) *Broadcasters, all institutions: from the immediate future.*

- The wider exploitation of educational opportunities through broadcasting and the new video technologies will continue to be limited by the strict limitations on recording under present copyright legislation. There should be new legislation to clarify the copyright position in favour of individual learners. (Paragraphs 8.29 and 8.32) *Department of Trade, Home Office, Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: within the short-term.*

Financial provision for institutions (chapter 9).

13.19 Decisions about the public funds to be allocated to continuing education should rank as of equal importance with decisions on the allocation of resources to the initial education sector. However, the increasingly tight limits placed on public expenditure over recent years need not prevent some developments in continuing education and, if there is increased public funding in the future, further developments will be possible. It is also therefore still appropriate to explore alternative methods of financing institutions for the provision of continuing education. Serious attention should be given to alternative financing arrangements in the form of collective funding, where there are various possible methods of collection — payroll tax, profits tax, insurance fund — but where the common object is to collect revenue from disparate sources for distribution to achieve agreed educational priorities. Thus, for example, it would be possible to allocate collective funding through the setting up of a 'continuing education fund' to allocate resources through a statutorily constituted board in accordance with predefined

regulations and agreed purposes, to provide special assistance in the growth of continuing education. Studies are therefore required, and working examples of collective funding in other countries could be examined, to identify the most effective alternative means of complementing or revising the present system of financing institutions, with the object of encouraging the development of continuing education and training. (Paragraphs 9.11 ff) *Treasury, Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: from the short to medium-term.*

The link between financial provision for institutions and financial support for learners is the system of fees charged to students. There are four possible fee policies which could be operated, which we have summarised as: education should be free at the point of take-up; fees should be charged to meet some part of the cost of provision; fees should be charged to meet the full cost of provision; and fees should be charged according to a multiple pricing policy. Insofar as this country has a national policy on fees, it is based on multiple pricing. That policy should be maintained, but more attention should be given to establishing principles about who should pay for what, if any, proportion of the costs of provision. Those principles should be related to broad categories of provision, for example, basic and post-basic education — no fees, and up-dating of knowledge and skills — approaching full cost fees. In addition to this formulation of a general policy, local education authorities should allow institutions, particularly adult education centres, some freedom in fixing fees, fees should be payable in instalments, there should be concessions for those on low incomes, and enrolment should be free for those who would otherwise suffer undue financial hardship or be debarred by reason of low income. (Paragraphs 9.20 ff) *Local authority associations, local education authorities, and all institutions: from the immediate future.*

Financial support for learners (chapter 10).

13.20 Educational opportunities beyond the age of compulsory schooling should be open to all without undue financial hardship, but lack of adequate financial means continues to be a major barrier to adults' access to education (chapter 4). It must be questioned whether the present methods of financing learners will enable the wider access of adults to continuing education over the next twenty years. It is therefore important that the present grants system should be modified and extended and that the feasibility of alternative systems of financial support should be examined.

- The mandatory grants system should be extended to cover

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part-time and short full-time courses, for distance learning as well as face-to-face tuition, so as to enable adults to continue their education wihout undue financial hardship. Courses designated for mandatory grants should be categorised at three levels — basic, non-advanced and higher — and receipt of an award at one level should not affect subsequent eligibility for an award at a higher level. (Paragraphs 10.36 ff) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: III: over the short to medium-term.*

- Attention should be given to the appropriate extension of paid educational leave in accordance with the ILO Convention 140, to which the United Kingdom government is a signatory. This might be seen as the first step towards a more extensive form of educational entitlement, since paid educational leave must by definition be confined to those in employment. The development of paid educational leave is most likely to be obtained through collective bargaining, which will lead to lack of uniformity. This could be minimised by enabling legislation to provide a general code of practice for the granting of paid education leave. (Paragraphs 10.41 to 10.44) *Department of Employment, Department of Education and Science, employers' associations, employers, Trades Union Congress, trades unions: IV: over the short to medium-term.*
- The introduction of a system of entitlements to education would be a major advance in educational provision and would lay the foundations of an educational system capable of responding rapidly and effectively to changing needs. A system of entitlements should be regarded as the longer-term goal, which requires detailed studies of the various possible methods of collecting and allocating the required funds, including educational insurance, negative income tax, and student loans and mortgages. The Council therefore proposes to undertake studies of the feasibility of educational entitlement systems so as to provide an informed basis for discussion and subsequent policy decisions about the phased introduction of an entitlement system. (Paragraphs 10.14 ff and 10.45 ff) *Treasury, Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: IV: from medium to long-term.*

Staffing and training (chapter 11)

13.21 With at least 200 thousand full-time, part-time and volunteer teaching staff at present employed in the post-school sector in England and Wales, the development of continuing education need not call for greatly increased numbers of staff, but it will require some redeployment of existing staff and the use of new skills. Concentration on quality through training and staff

development will therefore be as important as maintaining the present staffing numbers in the post-school sector. Educators should continue their own education. There will also need to be greater flexibility in the use of staff time both inside and outside the conventional hours of full-time teaching, which will call for new forms of employment contracts for full-time staff and wider deployment of part-time staff and volunteers.

- There should be a continuing increase in the quantity and quality of training and retraining opportunities for full-time and part-time staff in the understanding and skills needed for the education and training of adult learners. This should be encouraged by the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers, and a National Forum on the training of further education staff should be established along the lines advocated by the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers. (Paragraph 11.9) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office, local education authorities, all institutions: II: from the immediate future.*

- There should be appropriate changes in the contracts of both full and part-time staff to permit more flexible hours of work, including evenings, week-ends and the conventional academic holiday periods. (Paragraph 11.5) *Department of Education and Science, local authority associations, local education authorities: from the immediate future.*

- There should be more research about adult learners and in adult learning, an understanding of which should be central to the training and the knowledge and skills of staff engaged in continuing education. (Paragraph 11.8) *Universities, polytechnics and other selected institutions: II: from the immediate future.*

- Some full-time staff should be given, and trained for, specific responsibility for staff training and development within their institutions. (Paragraph 11.11) *All institutions: from the immediate future.*

Legislation (chapter 12).

13.22 The necessary national lead for the development of continuing education should be made manifest in legislation.

- Sections 41 and 42 of the 1944 Education Act should be reformulated with the needs of adults as well as of young people in mind. The existing sections 41(a) and 41(b) should be amalgamated and the proviso to sections 41 and 42 deleted. The reformulated section 41 should contain a comprehensive definition of continuing education, and should make explicit the duty of local education authorities to secure a varied and

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balanced provision in their area to meet the needs of people of all ages in the community. The reformulated section 42 should make explicit the duties of local education authorities in regard to provision for further and continuing education including the establishment of: information, advisory and counselling services for adults; regular training for staff; networks of local centres for continuing education; and consultative structures and financial and other support for continuing education bodies in their area. (Paragraphs 12.14 and 12.16) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: in the short-term.*

- Pending these statutory amendments, new regulations or memoranda of guidance should be issued by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office, which will give due regard to the educational needs of adults, will counteract the current interpretation of section 41 and its negative effects on educational opportunities for adults, and will set out the duties of local education authorities to secure a varied and balanced educational provision to meet the needs of adults. (Paragraph 12.17) *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Office: in the immediate future.*

13.23 These priorities for action show that much can be done in the next few years at relatively small additional cost to achieve a significant shift towards a continuing education system. Changes in organisational arrangements, accompanied by detailed studies for more substantial developments, will encourage an increasing awareness of the actual and potential value of continuing education, with consequent shifts in the opinions and attitudes of political and educational decision makers and the general public. We believe that this widening appreciation of the need for, and the benefits of, continuing education will lead to an acceptance of the validity of our proposals, including those with substantial funding implications, and to their implementation through the provision of additional funds.

13.24 It may well not be possible to build, even in the next twenty years, a complete structure of educational provision capable of accommodating, within the available economic resources and social priorities of the day, all the educational needs of the adult population throughout life. But we must start now to lay the foundations by finding ways to encourage many more adults to enter education, remove the barriers to their entry, and improve the coverage and responsiveness of educational provision. When the measures proposed in this report are implemented, this country will have achieved the basis of a comprehensive system of continuing education throughout life.

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13.25 The Council is in no doubt that such a system of continuing education is needed. Our education and training system must be developed and become fully accessible to the adult population, who will gain personally from its provision and become still more active and effective contributors to the country's social, economic and cultural well-being. It is now time for the comprehensive view of the future for continuing education and training, put forward in this report, to be transformed from policies to practice to the benefit of every adult in the country.

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(1.9) 7. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1979a)
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Chapter Two: The Case for a Comprehensive System of Continuing Education

(2.7) 9. See for example the similar view taken by the TUC and the CBI in:
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(2.24) 11. The Council has been commissioned by the Secretary of State for Education and Science to conduct an enquiry "to identify the general educational needs of the adult unemployed; to consider the various efforts currently being made to provide for them; and to advise on the most effective means of deploying available resources to develop, expand and improve the provision". The Council expects to publish its report in September 1982.

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(3.3) 12. The figures in paragraph 3.3 are taken from:
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in 'Employment Gazette' November 1980.

(3.21) 20. Op cit ACACE (1982a) *Adults — their educational experience and needs.*

(3.27) 21. McIntosh A (1980)
Women at work
in 'Employment Gazette' November 1980.

(3.40) 22. The Council has undertaken a joint study with Birkbeck College, London University Extra-Mural Department and others into part-time study opportunities in higher education in Britain. The results are published in:
Tight M (1982)
Part-time degree level study in the United Kingdom
ACACE Leicester 1982.

(3.46) 23. Williams G and Woodhall M (1979)
Independent further education
Policy Studies Institute London 1979.

(3.56) 24. National Institute of Adult Education (1970)
Adequacy of provision
NIAE Leicester 1970.

(3.58) 25. Op cit ACACE (1982a) *Adults — their educatioal experience and needs.*

(3.62) 26. Simpson J A (1973)
Feasibility study in the collection of adult education statistics
Council of Europe Strasbourg 1973.

(3.62) 27. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1977)
Learning opportunities for adults Vol IV Participation in Adult Education
OECD Paris 1977.

(3.64) 28. Woodhall M (1980)
The scope and costs of the education and training of adults in Britain
ACACE Leicester 1980.

(3.65) 29. Johnson R (1979)
Education and training in the '80s in Employment Gazette November 1979.

(3.72) 30. Op cit Killeen and Bird (1981).

Chapter Four: Barriers to Access

(4.1) 31. Op cit ACACE (1982a) *Adults — their educational experience and needs.*

(4.2) 32. Cross K P (1978)
"A critical review of state and national studies of the needs and interests of adult learners" in Stalford C B (Ed) *Adults learning needs and the demand for life-long learning*
National Institute of Education Washington DC 1978.

(4.5) 33. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1979b)
A strategy for the basic education of adults
ACACE Leicester 1979.

(4.6) 34. Trades Union Congress (1978)
Priorities in continuing education: a TUC statement.
TUC London 1978.

(4.9) 35. Little A, Gundara J, and Willey R (1982)
Adult education and the Black communities
ACACE Leicester 1982.

(4.15) 36. Op cit ACACE (1982a) *Adults — their educational experience and needs.*

(4.21) 37. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1979c)
Links to learning
ACACE Leicester 1979.

(4.23) 38. The Council commissioned an enquiry into the value of accommodation specifically designed for the education of adults. The results are reported in:
Percy K, Saunders M Normie G and Shepherd A (1982)
Prime use accommodation for adult education
ACACE Leicester 1982.

(4.26) 39. In association with the National Institute of Adult Education, the Council conducts a survey each November of LEA adult education fee levels and enrolment numbers. Fees rose by an average of 37% between 1979 and 1980 and enrolments fell by an average of 11%. The respective figures between 1980 and 1981 are a 25% increase and a 3% decrease.

(4.26) 40. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1980a)
Inter-authority free trade and fee recoupment arrangements for non-vocational adult education.
ACACE Leicester 1980.

(4.30) 41. Op cit Williams and Woodhall (1979).

(4.31) 42. See for example:
McIntosh N E Woodley A (1979)
Combining education with working life: Paper given at the fourth international conference on higher education.
Available in microfiche in CORE Vol 3 No 1 1979.

Freeman R (1976)
The invisible students: survey of National Extension College students
NEC Cambridge 1976.

Chapter Five: Information, Advisory and Counselling Services

(5.1) 43. Op cit DES (1973) *Adult education: a plan for development.*

(5.1) 44. Op cit ACACE (1982a) *Adults — their educational experience and needs.*

(5.2) 45. Op cit ACACAE (1979c) *Links to learning.*

(5.2) 46. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Eucation (1981b)
Directory of educational guidance services for adults
ACACE Leicester 1981.

(5.3) 47. Op cit Central Policy Review Staff (1980).

(5.3) 48. Manpower Services Commission (1981b)
An 'Open Tech' programme: to help meet adult training and retraining needs at technician and related levels
MSC London 1981.

This consultative document proposes 'Open Tech' information centres along the following lines:
"Information Centres, geographically dispersed so as to be easily accessible, would be able to take individual queries, provide information about what is available (including existing provision outside the 'Open Tech' Programme if these will meet the need), give limited advice and put individuals or organisations in touch with particular schemes for more detailed advice. It is envisaged that Centres would be based on existing facilities such as FE Colleges and the ESD Job Library network. The use of Viewdata system should be considered. A good deal of piloting and testing will be required. Information systems can be excessively costly; and duplication would need to be avoided. Ways of linking in with existing transfer or planned information storage systems (eg: the credit transfer information system being considered by the DES) would have to be thoroughly examined before any new system was set up."

(5.3) 49. Op cit DES (1980) *Continuing education.*

(5.6) 50. The enquiry, based at the Open University regional office in Leeds, is being conducted by Derek Gains and Linda Butler.

(5.11) 51. Educational brokering in the United States is briefly described, with references to other published information, in an Appendix in *Links to learning,* Op cit ACACE (1979c).

Chapter Six: Ways in and through the Education System

(6.1) 52. Op cit ACACE (1979a) *Towards continuing education.*

(6.5) 53. Op cit ACACE (1979b) *A strategy for the basic education of adults.*

(6.8) 54. Op cit DES (1980) *Continuing education.*

(6.11) 55. Storey S and Reid M (1980)
Further opportunities in focus
National Foundation for Educational Research Slough 1980.

(6.12) 56. Percy K A and Lucas M S (1980)
The open college and alternatives
Lancaster University 1980.

(6.15) 57. Bligh D and Caves R (1979)
The ability environment
University Teaching Services University of Exeter 1979.

(6.17) 58. Toyne P (1979)
Educational credit transfer: feasibility study — final report.
Peter Toyne Exeter 1979.

(6.19) 59. Evidence collected in a Warwick University survey in 1965-71 (Walker P 'The University Performance of Mature Students' in *Research in Education* No 14) showed that mature students' performances compared very favourably with 'straight-through' students. Mature students gained the same proportion of first-class degrees (5.1% compared with 5.3% of their youger counterparts), significantly more upper second class degrees (40%:29%) and correspondingly fewer thirds (9.7%:12.8%). A review of degree results at Lancaster University in 1975 (*Times Higher Education Supplement* 17 December 1976) reinforced this conclusion: 12% of mature students gained firsts and 45% upper seconds, compared with 4% and 30% of other students. Large numbers of unqualified adults have now achieved graduate status through the Open University. Since the early 1970s Sweden has had a scheme which opens nearly all higher education to adults with uncompleted secondary education. Any adult over 24 with four years work experience can apply to enter a full-time higher education institution without the usual academic qualifications. Work experience is defined very broadly and includes military service and the care of children. The only academic requirements are for students to be proficient in Swedish and to have a good enough command of English to study texts in that language. These unqualified adult re-entrants often encounter study problems in the first year, which they usually overcome at the cost of a slower study speed than the traditional students. (Lillemor K 'A New General Admissions Policy' in *Innovation in access to higher education* International Council for Educational Development, New York 1978).

(6.21) 60. See for example the examination in:
Jones H A and Williams K E (1979)
Adult students and higher education
ACACE Leicester 1979.

(6.23) 61. Council for National Academic Awards
Opportunities in higher education for mature students
CNAA London (current).

(6.26) 62. Evans N (1981)
The knowledge revolution: making the link between learning and work.
Grant McIntyre London 1981.

(6.29) 63. Op cit Toyne (1979).

(6.30) 64. National Council for Educational Awards (1978)
Discussion document on an NCEA award structure for recurrent education
NCEA Dublin 1978.

Chapter Seven: Accessibility of Institutions

(7.6) 65. Op cit Percy, Saunders, Normie, and Shepherd (1982)
This research report on *Prime use accommodation for adult education* was commissioned by the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education to identify and analyse the advantages and disadvantages of prime use accommodation. The authors also draw some comparisons between prime and dual use premises.

(7.6) 66. Department of Education and Science (1982)
Survey of shared and extended use of schools in 1978-79
DES London 'Statistical Bulletin 1/82'.
This survey report shows that in England in autumn term 1978 there was regular shared use for adult and further education purposes in 19% of primary schools and 63% of secondary schools. This use was significantly concentrated in schools with 'adult education wings' (ie: dual use premises). In England in 1978 there were such wings in 220 primary schools and 530 secondary schools.

(7.9) 67. Flude R and Parrott A (1979)
Education and the challenge of change
Open University Press Milton Keynes 1979.
Chapter 7 'The way ahead: the front line institutions' examines the idea of local continuing education centres in detail and concludes with a health service analogy: "Our front-line contact points — the educational equivalent of general practices or health centres — would act as referral centres passing people along to appropriate help at neighbourhood colleges of further education (cottage and district hospitals) and, if necessary, on to other specialist higher education institutions."

(7.12) 68. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1980b)
Local development councils for adult education
ACACE Leicester 1980.
This survey report details the numbers, types and functions of local development councils in existence in 1979.

(7.14) 69. Op cit ACACE (1981a) *Protecting the future for adult education.*

Chapter Eight: New Patterns of Learning

(8.5) 70. Op cit DES (1980) *Continuing education.*

(8.8) 71. House of Commons Fifth Report from the Education, Science and Arts Committee (1980)
The funding and organisation of courses in higher education
H M Stationery Office London 1980.
Volume 1, paragraph 103, of this report contains the recommendation "that as continuing education is developed particular attention must be given to course length and mode, and to the importance to students of offering neighbourhood co-ordination of conveniently timed courses."

(8.11) 72. Op cit DES (1980) *Continuing education.*

(8.12) 73. National Institute of Adult Education
Residential short courses — summer 1982
NIAE Leicester 1982.
This latest edition of a regularly published six-monthly calendar of short general education courses shows 1,782 courses (lasting from 2 days to 6 weeks) available between April and December 1982.

(8.12) 74. Op cit ACACE (1981a) *Protecting the future for adult education* page 36.

(8.13) 75. Equal Opportunities Commission (1980)
Nurseries in colleges and universities
EOC Manchester 1980.

(8.17) 76. The National Extension College in Cambridge publishes a list of colleges and centres providing Flexistudy facilities.

(8.21) 77. The 'Adult independent learning project' is the subject of a report to the Winston Churchill memorial trust by Sheila M Dale, librarian at the Open University, Walton Hall, Bucks.

(8.25) 78. Op cit MSC (1981b) *An 'Open Tech' programme.*

(8.26) 79. Some BBC examples of these linked initiatives are: 'Speak for yourself', an English as a second language series for ethnic communities, in which 185,000 glossaries were distributed through public libraries and community groups; 'Feeling great', a health series which used up an initial printing of 200,000 'send for' booklets, and prompted orders for a further 150,000 reprinted copies provided by the Health Education Council; 'Discovering English churches' which led to 40,000 requests for information from the BBC and the English Tourist Board.

(8.29) 80. Secretary of State for Trade (1981)
Reform of the law relating to copyright, designs and performers' protection: a consultative paper (Cmnd 8302)
H M Stationery Office London 1981.

Chapter Nine: Financing of Institutions

(9.4) 81. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1980)
Formal response to the MSC review of the Employment and Training Act 1973
ACACE Leicester 1980.

(9.4) 82. Op cit MSC (1981a) *A new training initiative.*

(9.5) 83. Op cit Woodhall (1980) for an examination of the expendture on the education and training of adults and its relationship to total public expenditure on education and training.

(9.14) 84. Schuller T (1978)
Education through life
Fabian Society London 1978.

(9.15) 85. Manpower Services Commission (1976)
Training for vital skills
MSC London 1976.

(9.24) 86. Op cit DES (1980) *Continuing education.*
This consultative paper on 'post experience vocational provision for those in employment' bases much of its funding proposals on this 'full costs' proposition.

(9.25) 87. Full cost fees are in practice variously defined from covering teaching costs, which are a substantial part of the total current costs, to the literal sense of covering all the current and capital costs required to maintain the institution. Whichever definition is used the costs to be covered by fees will be high.

(9.25) 88. Op cit Williams and Woodhall (1979)
"...independent further education is in a constant state of flux and ... a substantial number of schools which apparently existed in one year, have closed, or at least cannot be contacted a year later" (page 30).

(9.27) 89. McIntosh N E (1981)
"Demand and supply in the education of adults" in *Educational Analysis: Continuing Education* Vol 3 No 3 Falcon Press 1981.

(9.28) 90. Op cit ACACE (1981a) *Protecting the future for adult education*
In considering fee policies in LEA adult general education provision, the Council stated (page 41) that "... the misunderstanding of the 'recreational' nature of the adult education service and the financial crises of the last few

years have combined to prompt the contention that student fees can properly be raised to the point where the service is largely self-financing. To argue this is to deny the educational needs of much of the adult population: nothing is more calculated to turn the service into a middle-class preserve where only the popular and profitable activities survive. The three principles which have become generally accepted and applied in the public adult education service since 1945 are that:

- Students should ordinarily be expected to make some contribution to the cost of provision;
- Fees charged to adult students and entitlements to remissions of fees should take account of each individual adult's capacity to pay;
- There should be a significant element of subsidy from public funds."

Chapter Ten: Financial Support for Learners

(10.10) 91. Op cit Killeen and Bird (1981).

(10.15) 92. The Council for Educational Technology has proposed that "... to ensure the economic support of students who will wish to undertake major courses at various stages throughout their lives, we need to investigate possible schemes of study leave, or of a continuing education entitlement similar to the current mandatory grant system but increasing in value with time and encashable for any type of continuing education. Such schemes are an essential part of any true system of recurrent or continuing education, and it is important that they should extend to the widest range of education and training opportunity, since it is those least likely to undertake formal academic studies who will most need to be encouraged into returning to study" (CET, *Microelectronics: their implications for education and training*, 1978, page 8). The Confederation of British Industry has suggested the introduction of sabbatical leave from work, which (while conceived primarily as an employment spreading device rather than an educational advance) raises the possibility of adults using time freed from work for education and training (CBI, *Jobs — facing the future*, 1980). Cunningham has raised the question 'why not move to a system where everyone is entitled to the equivalent of, say, six to eight years of full-time study (training or education) after 16 — periods of study which need not necessarily be taken consecutively and which could be spread through adult life...?" (Cunningham G, 'Cash in hand' in *Times Educational Supplement*, 21 March 1980).

(10.20) 93. Op cit DES/SED (1978) *Higher education into the 1990s.*

(10.54) 94. Op cit Cunningham (1980).

Chapter Eleven: Staffing and Training

(11.9) 95. Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers (1975)
The training of teachers for further education
ACSTT London 1975.

Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers (1978a)
The training of adult education and part-time further education teachers
ACSTT London 1978.

Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers (1978b)
Training teachers for education management in further and adult education
ACSTT London 1978.

(11.9) 96. See for example:
Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1980c)
Regional provision for the training of part-time adult education staff
ACACE Leicester 1980.

(11.9) 97. Op cit Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers (1975) paragraph 30.

(11.11) 98. Op cit ACACE (1981a) *Protecting the future for adult education* paragraphs 69 to 71 where the training of part-time adult education staff is considered more fully.

Chapter Twelve: Legislation — the 1944 Education Act

(12.3) 99. Ministry of Education (1947)
Pamphlet No 8 *Further education: the scope and content of its opportunities under the Education Act 1944*
H M Stationery Office London 1947.

(12.9) 100. White Paper, Cmnd 9703
Technical Education
H M Stationery Office London 1956.
Among other aims, this White Paper planned to double the numbers of young employees given day release by their employers to obtain technical qualifications. Government undertook to make available for technical college building in 1956-61 capital resources almost double those allocated over the previous ten years.
White Paper, Cmnd 1254
Better opportunities in technical education
H M Stationery Office London 1961.
Aimed mainly at a further large increase in opportunities for school leavers on less advanced course for technicians, craftsmen and operatives.

(12.9) 101. Op cit ACACE (1979b) *A strategy for the basic education of adults.*

(12.11) 102. Op cit ACACE (1981a) *Protecting the future for adult education* in which the Council advocated the early adoption of a defined 'minimum threshold commitment' to adult general education by which central government and the local education authorities might judge the adequacy of their policies and provision.

(12.12) 103. Department of Education and Science (1981b)
The legal basis of further education: a review by officers from the Department of Education and Science, the Welsh Office and the local authorities.
DES London 1981.

(12.13) 104. Op cit White Paper, Cmnd 9703.

(12.13) 105. Op cit DES (1981b) *The legal basis of further education*

(12.14) 106. Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (1981c)
Formal response to the review of the legal basis of further education.
ACACE Leicester 1981.

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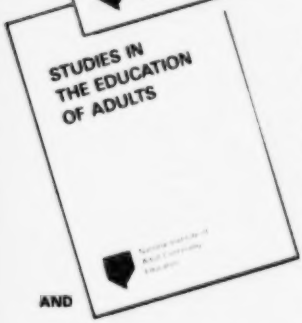

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